REFORMATION OR RUINE:

BEING

Certain SERMONS

upon *LEVIT.* XXVI. 23, 24.

First Preached, and afterwards with Neceſſary Enlargements fitted for Publick Uſe.

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Ezek. 3. 17. *Son of Man, I have made thee a Watch-man to the Houſe of Iſrael: Therefore hear the Word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.*

Pſal. 80. 19. *Turn us again, O Lord God of Hoſts, cauſe thy face to ſhine, and we ſhall be ſaved.*

LONDON,
Printed for *Tho. Parkhurſt* at the three Crowns and Bible at the lower end of *Cheap-ſide*, 1675.

BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA

TO THE
READER.

Chriſtian Reader,

BE pleaſed to underſtand a few things concerning theſe enſuing Sermons. *Viz.*

1. That the Author hath had no leſs Encouragement to the Publication of them, than in ſuch Caſes is uſual, *i. e.* the good Approbation (that he may not ſay alſo the Solicitation) of ſome of his worthy Brethren and Betters, to whoſe cenſure they were committed, and in whoſe hands (in order to their peruſal) for ſome time they reſted.

2. That having been in the Flagrancy of the late Warre, about thirty

four Months agoe, fitted and designed for publick Use, they have ever since lyen like the Cripple at the Pool of *Bethesda*, ready indeed for the Press, and there waiting; but (till very lately) still wanting one to put them in; the Obscurity of any Author (if a Countrey Minister *è Vulgo Cleri*) being no small discouragement to such an undertakin g, forasmuch as it is the Interest of every Stationer antecedently thereunto to consider, that it is the Name, and Fame and Popularity of the Preacher, which doth mainly contribute to the certain and quick sale of his Sermons: it being the manner of Ordinary Readers not so much to regard *what* is written, as by *whom*: Consonant whereunto seems that Aphorism of the wise Observer, *Eccles.* 9.16. *The Poor mans Wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.*

But the Old Saying is here considerable, *Sat citò, si sat benè*; although the Sermons so long since composed, have

have not till this time a-day been brought to light; nevertheleſs all's well, if (being at laſt come abroad, by the Bleſſing of God) they prove to be profitable, ſo as to verifie the common Proverb, *Better late than never.* The onely thing obvious to be objected, is, The *Unſeaſonableneſs* of the preſent Publication, in a time of Peace, of what was compoſed three years agoe, amidſt the Noyſe of Warre. But for the preventing or removing of any ſuch prejudice, which may occaſion the utter rejecting or ſlighting thereof, as now altogether needleſs and uſeleſs, (like an Almanack of the other Year, quite out of date) I ſhall humbly ſuggeſt a few things to conſideration; and for that Purpoſe be it conſidered:

(1) Though *Tempora mutantur*, yet there is ſmall, or no Appearance, that, *Nos mutamur:* I mean, although through the good hand of God upon the Councels of the Nation, there is a bleſſed Change in our outward Condition,

from a deſtructive Warre to a moſt deſired Peace; nevertheleſs it appears not that there is any Change in the corrupt Manners and ungodly Converſations of the generality among us; thoſe who were wicked and unreformed before, being as unreformed and wicked ſtill. How doth prophaneneſs of all ſorts, and in all ſorts, continue and abound as viſibly as before? Can we inſtance how or wherein we have been or are Reformed by any of Gods Judgments that of latter years have been upon us? Doe not we ſtill perſiſt to walk as croſs and contrary to God, as heretofore? May not God juſtly take up the ſame iterated Complaint againſt us, as againſt his People of old, ſaying as in *Amos* 4. 6, 8, 9, 10. *Yet, yet, yet—have ye not returned unto me, ſaith the Lord*; And as in *Iſa.* 1. 4, 5. *Ah ſinfull Nation, a People laden with Iniquity—Why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more? ye will revolt more and more.*

(2) Conſequently conſider, *how contrary*

trary to our deſerts God hath given us the Bleſſing of a *preſent Peace*, and how ſeaſonable thereupon it is for us to mind and to be minded of that in *Ezek.* 36. 31, 32. *Then ſhall ye remember your own evil wayes and your doings, that were not good, and ſhall loath your ſelves in your own ſight for all your Iniquities, and for all your Abominations. Not for your ſakes doe I this, ſaith the Lord God, be it known unto you, be aſhamed and confounded for your own wayes, O Houſe of Iſrael.*

Whatever God in Mercy hath done for us, it concerns us to know and acknowledge, that it is not for our own ſake that God hath done it; and that we may be as loathſome to God now, as before; and that the minding of our ſins with ſhame, and ſorrow, and ſelf-loathing, is a Duty which God doth even now call for and expect from us.

(3) Conſider, that upon what terms ſoever Peace with the neighbour Nati-

ons about us be concluded, no Peace can be made with God upon any terms on this ſide *Reformation.* 'Tis the Sinners Reformation which under Chriſt is the onely way to Reconciliation with a provoked God; ſo that whoever be our Friends, or at Peace with us, we may be ſure, that if we are not Reformed, God is ſtill our Enemy?

(4) Conſider, If we remain ſtill *Unreformed*, and God not reconciled, what (according to Reaſon and Scripture) is to be expected? what, but Gods bereaving us of our preſent *Peace?* what, but a return of the ſame Judgements as we formerly ſuffered? Yea what but the inflicting of ſeven times worſe than before, according to the tenour of the Text in hand? *Lev.* 26. 23, 24. Well may we ſay to thoſe, who during the reigning Evils of the preſent times, do flatter themſelves with hopes of ſeeing *good dayes*, as *Jehu* did to the Meſſengers of *Jehoram*, 2 *King.* 9. 22.

What

What (laſting) *peace ſo long as the Whoredoms and Abominations of our Land are ſo many?*

(5) Conſider, What a farther ſtrong Obligation to Reformation Gods wonder of Mercy in the *preſent Peace* and quiet of our Nation hath put upon us. As God ſeeks by his Judgments to drive and affright Sinners into a Reformation of their croſs and contrary walkings, ſo by his Mercies doth he draw and allure them thereunto. Theſe are ſtyled, *The cords of a Man, and bands of Love*, Hoſ. 11. 4. With ſuch Cords and Bands doth God now attempt to draw, and to with-draw us from our ſins, and to draw us to himſelf and Service, even with the Silken Golden Cord, the ſweet Bleſſing of a welcome Peace, after the bitter Experience of a bloody Warre, and ſuch a Warre of which it may be ſaid in alluſion to thoſe words of the Prophet, *Ezek.* 19. 14. (*This is a Lamentation, and ſhall be for a Lamentation.*) This was the Subject

ject of ſore Lamentation among our ſelves, and this is like to be for a Lamentation, and for a Lamentation (God knows how long) among all our neighbour Countreys and Kingdoms. O what Thankfulneſs doth our preſent Peace (comparatively with thoſe our Neighbours who do ſigh and groan and bleed under the want of it) call for from us? But withall conſider,

(6) What is the Thankſgiving which upon account of our preſent Peace (with all its concomitant Bleſſings) God doth require, or wherein it doth conſiſt? Surely it is not in that of our Lips merely, but of our Lives; it is not *verbal* but *real* thanks, that God expects. And to the Queſtion, *What's that?* It may in a word be anſwered, *It is Reformation*; This is Thankfulneſs, real Thankfulneſs, the onely real Thankfulneſs; and this is it that the enſuing Sermons do mainly drive at, and which the Author doth therein induſtriouſly ſet himſelf to drive on. The

Apoſtle

Apoſtle indeed exhorts us to *offer by Chriſt the Sacrifice of Prayſe to God continually, giving thanks to his Name*; *Heb.* 13. 15. But to what purpoſe is the Sacrifice of a wicked, of an unreformed Perſon or People? Surely the Sacrifice of their Prayſe is of no better eſteem with God than that of their Prayer, of which *Solomon* teſtifies, ſaying, *It is abomination to the Lord, Prov.* 15. 8. Without Reformation, Prayer it ſelf is an Abomination to God: That the ſacrifice of Prayer may be accepted, it is abſolutely neceſſary, that the Sacrificer or ſupplicant himſelf be perſonally reformed.

(7) Conſider, That our perſiſting to walk contrary to God, notwithſtanding his preſent ceaſing to walk contrary to us (I mean his gracious dealing with us, in the reſtoring our Peace) will receive a new *Aggravation*, and expoſe us to that ſhamefull, heart-cutting reproach, *Deut.* 32. 6. *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O ye fooliſh People and unwiſe?*

Upon

Upon ſuch a perſiſting in wayes of Contrariety to our Benefactor, it may be juſtly layd to our charge, That we have added Ingratitude to our Sin; and this Addition will beget a new Controverſie betwixt God and us, as appears by the dear-bought Experience of Gods ungratefull *Iſrael* of old, *Mic.* 6. 2, 3. *The Lord hath a Controverſie with his People, and he will plead with Iſrael*; and what was the ground of this Controverſie? It was *Iſraels* Ingratitude, as appears by the Bill of Indictment brought in againſt them, and left upon Record in the following Verſes, 3, 4, 5. Hereupon it may well become us all, (both in Prudence and Conſcience) to ſay as did that zealous Reformer upon a like Conſideration as before ſpecified, *Ezr.* 9. 13. *After all this is come upon us*, (theſe and theſe Judgements) *for our evil deeds, and for our great treſpaſſes, being the Lord our God hath puniſhed us leſs than our Iniquities deſerve, and hath delivered us* out of ſuch a Deſtructive

Warre

Warre as as this, (given us ſuch a deſired, undeſerved Peace) *ſhould we again break his Commandements, and joyn in Affinity*— ſhould we continue ſtill unreformed? ſhould we ſtill perſiſt in wayes of contrariety to God? *would not he be angry with us, till he had conſumed us?*

The Premiſes conſidered, the inſtant publication of the enſuing Sermons ſeems to be no leſs ſeaſonable and ſuitable to the preſent times and ſtate of things among us, than was the Prophet *Obeds* Sermon to *Aſa* and all *Judah*, immediately upon their deliverance from an eminent Danger, that threatned both King and Kingdom, 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. *The Lord is with you* (ſaith the Prophet) *while ye are with him; and if ye ſeek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forſake him, he will forſake you.*

While we are with God, we may be ſure that God is and will be with us, but no longer; for if we forſake him, we ſhall be forſaken by him: And woe

to

to *Asa*, with all *Judah* and *Benjamin*; Wo to King, and woe to Kingdom when God departs from them, *Hos.* 9. 12. Reformation then you perceive is as necessary for the preventing of future, as for the removal of incumbent Judgments; it is alike necessary to the preserving, as to the restoring of the Peace and Prosperity of a Nation.

I will conclude this Prefatory Epistle in allusion to those words upon Record by the Prophet, *Isa.* 40. 6. *The Voyce said, Crye; And he said, What shall I crye?* God, it seems, had by a secret Voyce given something in charge to the Prophet, by him alone to be proclaimed in the Ears of the people, [*A Voyce said, Crye,*] whereupon the Prophet listening to his Charge, sayes, [*What shall I crye?*] In allusion hereunto, the Author craves leave to say, That to his seeming he hears somewhat the like from God, given in charge by him and other the Heralds and Ministers of God, to be proclaimed throughout all

corners

corners and quarters of the Land; The Voyce of God by his Judgements, (his former Judgments) ſays to us, *Cry*: And the Voyce of God by his Mercies, (his preſent Mercies) ſayes to us, *Cry*. Now what is it that we are bid thus to crye? What is it in effect more than this one word *Reformation*, *Reformation?* And that it may be done with more Efficacy, what more needfull to be cryed than theſe two or three words, wherewith the following Sermons in the Frontiſpiece thereof are intituled, *Reformation or Ruine*, *Reformation or Ruine?* Reformation is the thing which the Judgements of God as with a loud Voyce do call and cry for; It is that which the Mercies of God do aloud call for; It is that which the Text in hand, *Lev.* 24. 23, 24. doth call for; It is that which God himſelf by all theſe doth with A Vengeance call for, *i. e.* with A Vengeance threatned; yea, with a Vengeance upon Vengeance threatned, if the Cry be not heard,

and

and his Call anſwered: What remains then, but that by theſe *Cryes* of God, theſe Out-cryes of his, we be all of us ſo *timely* awakened, as that we may not *finally* be ruined. This verily is both *Finis operis & operantis, i. e.* It is the native tendency of the enſuing Sermons, and it is alſo the hearts Deſire and Prayer of the (however weak and unworthy, yet) truely willing and well-meaning Author,

Thomas Hotchkis.

The

The enſuing Sermons being (for the better Edification) divided into *Sections*, with an *Index* of the Contents thereof prefixed to the whole, it is expedient that before the reading of any *Section* the Reader would caſt his Eye upon the *Index*, whereby acquainting himſelf with the *Contents* thereof, he may know, before he reads, what he is to expect therein.

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2. *By*

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2. Intenſivè, *by an encreaſe of one and the ſame Judgement, as to the Degree or Degrees thereof.*

3. Protenſivè, *by lengthening or protracting a Judgement.*

4. Cumulativè, *by multiplying judgments, adding one judgement to another, ſpecially Spiritual judgments to Temporal.*

5. In Progenie, *or* Succeſſivè (*if I may ſo ſay,*) *by puniſhing Sinners not onely in their own Perſons, but alſo in their ſucceſſive Iſſue or Poſterity.*

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4. *Nor*

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ſincere

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1. *By Punishment threatned, before it came to Execution.*

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Firſt, That our Reformation be a Real & ſubſtantial Reformation; as touching the Reality whereof, we are minded,

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2. *That it be not a bare out-ſide Reformation.*

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1. *Becauſe it is* τὸ ἴδιον, *every mans Own Buſineſs; foraſmuch as,* 1. *Every man can do this Beſt, and* 2. *Is bound to do it Moſt.*

2. *Becauſe till we are our ſelves reformed, we are much unfit to ſet upon the work of reforming others, and it is too too improbable that our work ſhould ſucceed, or take effect, if endeavoured.*

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Sect. 28. *Second Exhortation is to a Private Reformation, the Reformation of our Families, to which by apt Scriptures we are perſwaded.* p. 121

Sect. 29. *Third Exhortation is, to endeavour a Publick Reformation; wherein is aſſerted, That ſome Perſons may doe very*

very much, though it be yielded, that ſome ſort of Perſons can do but little. The Perſons who may do much for the effecting of a publick Reformation are ſaid to be Men in Authority, Civil or Eccleſiaſtical, the Supreme or Subordinate Magiſtrates; and what theſe may and ought to doe, is, Faithfully to execute their Office, and to diſcharge their Truſt in that behalf. The Perſons of whom it is yielded, they can doe (comparatively) little as to a publick Reformation, are Private perſons, perſons in a private Station; yet what theſe may and can doe, they are exhorted to doe, to make uſe of the ancient Arms and Armour of the Church, (*i. e.* Preces & Lacrymæ,) 1. *To Mourn,* 2. *To Pray; Not to weep and curſe, not to weep and rayle, weep and revile, but to Weep and Pray.* p. 125

Sect. 30. *Third Qualification of a Sinners Reformation is, that it be Impartial, not of this or that ſin onely, but of all kinds of Sin; yet that it be in ſuch*

such sort Universal, as that upon some account it be Special, i. e. *that it be a Reformation of certain more special sins,* e. g.

1. *Of our* Dalilah *or* Diana *sins,* i. e. *such as have yielded us most Pleasure and most Profit.*

2. *Of Gross and scandalous sins.*

3. *Of more Hainous sins, though abstracted and separated from Scandal.*

4. *Of such sins as have more visibly, or most especially provoked God severely to punish us.*

5. *The Sins of the Times,* i. e. *such as the Generality of Men and Women in the places where we live, are notoriously guilty of.*

6. *Of sins of Omission as well as of Commission, whereby our Reformation may be said to be as well positive, as privative; meer privations being much insignificant in Divinity as well as in Philosophy.* p. 131

Sect. 31. *Fourth Qualification of a Sinners Reformation, is, That it be Speedy; which*

which that it may be, the manifold mischiefs of Delayes are set before us, some possible, some certain and more than probable, it being certainty.

1. *That Delayes of Reformation will cost us dear.*

2. *That Sinners, the longer they delay to Reform, the farther off from Reforming they will still and still be; forasmuch as they will have still, 1. Less Heart. 2. Less Power to, or for it.*

3. *Impediments will still be the same and perhaps grow upon us.* p. 142

Sect. 32. *Fifth Qualification of our Reformation is, That it be Constant; wherein Sinners are to see,*

1. *That it be not onely while they are under the Rod, (the heavy Punishments of God) but that they continue still as reformed persons after Punishments are removed.*

2. *That it be not onely while they are under the restraint of good Governours and Governours and Govern-*

ment, but when they are their own men and left to themselves, that being set at liberty they would, like David, *persist to run the way (not which formerly they did, but the way) of Gods Commandements.* p. 146

Sect. 33. *The second sort of Direction is to such Means as do natively conduce to Reformation: Where we are in the first place admonished of six main Impediments to be removed out of the way:*

The first whereof is, Our not considering the Author of our Sufferings, Who it is that doth punish us; Hereupon we are directed and exhorted under all Sufferings not so much to look at Instruments, as to the Hand of God lifted up against us; Thus to doe, being both 1. *Short, and* 2*ly. Safe work, wherein we cannot erre, or mistake.* p. 150

Sect.

Sect. 34. *Second Impediment is, A ſlighting and deſpiſing of Gods Judgements, a grievous Sin ſo to doe, and a ſin which doth manifeſt it ſelf more eſpecially in People by theſe two things:*

1. *By their continued Pomp and pride.*

2. *By their continued Luxury and Senſuality: Of which Sins (as moſt unbecoming a Suffering Condition) Sinners are admoniſhed, and withall exhorted to lay to heart the Hand of God upon them.* p. 156

Sect. 35. *Third Impediment is, Inſenſibleneſs of our ſins as the Cauſes of Gods Judgements; for a Remedy whereof we are directed and exhorted to three things:*

1. *To ſearch after thoſe ſins which have cauſed God to puniſh us, beginning this ſearch firſt at home (reflecting upon our ſelves and our own Families) and then loking farther off.*

2. *After Search, to confeſs our Sins to God, as the juſt Cauſes of our Suffering; this being a Sinners accepting the Puniſhment of his Iniquities.*

3. *To Humble our ſelves in the ſight of God for them; firſt of all and moſt of all for our own ſins, and then for the ſins of others.* p. 162

Sect. 36. *Fourth Impediment is, Wilfulneſs; of which therefore we are admoniſhed, this Wilfulneſs being both Sin and the Puniſhment of Sin; and inſtead of a Will againſt Reformation,* (if ye will not be reformed,) *we are exhorted to ſet up a Will and Reſolution for it, ſuch as was that in* Joſhuah, *ſaying,* I and my Houſe will ſerve the Lord. p. 175

Sect. 37. *Fifth Impediment is carnal Truſt and Confidence, which is two-fold:*

1. *Truſt to External Priviledges and Performances,* i. e. *upon account of our being Chriſtians in Profeſſion, and our Outward Conformity to certain Chriſtian*

ſtian Duties; the Vanity of which Truſt is demonſtrated.

2. *Truſt to external Helps and Helpers; whether our own Strength, or the Strength of our Confederates; the exceeding ſinfulneſs of which carnal Confidence is diſcovered, and the miſchievous danger, or conſequents thereof, manifeſted; and as the Remedy thereof Truſt in God alone is preſcribed.* p. 181

Sect. 38. *Sixth Impediment is, Atheiſme and Infidelity; the Queſtion being anſwer'd, Whether there be any ſuch Men-monſters in theſe times, among us, as Infidels and Atheiſts? And what Means are to be uſed for a Remedy thereof: Where a Letter of the late Earl of* Marleborough, *written a few dayes before his death, in the Month of* April, 1665. *to an Honourable Courtier, being* verbatim *tranſcribed, is with much earneſtneſs commended to ſerious conſideration, for the timely reducing of ſuch Atheiſts and Infidels*

as are with great ſadneſs and aſtoniſhment of heart ſo much talked of in this diſſolute Age. p. 190

Sect. 39. *Two other Means as conducing much to Reformation, are directed to, viz. The Word of God and Prayer.*

Firſt, The Word of God, which upon a two-fold account is commended to our great regard:

(1) *In that it is the Objective Rule of Reformation; wherein is ſhewed (for prevention of Miſtake) what Manner of Rule it is and is not:* e. g.

1. *It is a Rule* in ſuo genere, *of its Kind, but not* in omni genere, *or for all things.*

2. *In what things it is onely a General Rule.*

3. *In what things it was intended by God for a Particular Rule; things needfull to be obſerved, whereby to prevent Diſquietments, both in our Conſciences, as alſo diſquieting Church and*

and State, and our being disquieted by them.

(2) *In that the Word of God (the Holy Scriptures) is the Instrumental Efficient Cause of Subjective Reformation, (Gods great Instrument to convert Sinners:) Upon both the said Accounts we are exhorted to consult it upon all due Occasions, to prize and study it, and to govern our Lives by it.* p. 208

Sect. 40. *The last Means is Prayer; and in this Direction we are minded of that, which being under Divine Punishment we should mainly pray for,* viz. *Not so much that our Punishment may be mitigated and removed, as that it may be blessed of God, and sanctified to our Reformation.* p. 217

Sect. 41. *The third and last Direction is to such Motives as are fit and proper to induce us to the said Reformation; Of which the first is to consider,*

(1.) *That not to be Reformed by Gods Judgements, is a Walking contrary to God, and that in a special or signal manner.*

(2.) *What manner of God he is whom such unreformed Sinners do walk contrary unto, he being such a one as he says of himself in the first Verse of this Chapter, in these words,* [I am Jehovah your God:] *Hereupon we are more particularly minded, That the God we walk contrary unto, is,*

1. Jehovah, the Lord; *the importance of which his Name is intimated in several particulars, and applyed to the purpose in hand.*

2. *That he is a God whom we have Covenanted with, or a God in Covenant with us.* p. 223

Sect. 42. *Second Motive is, the ingenuous Consideration of this,* viz. *That we have not been Reformed without these Things, and long before this Time, by Other Things, and what those Other Things are, briefly as to some of them, specified.* p. 228

Sect.

Sect. 43. *Third Motive, drawn from the Conſideration of this,* viz. *That it is not too late for Sinners to Reform, or be Reformed by the Judgements of God upon them, proved,*

(1) *By thoſe Gracious Deſcriptions which God doth give of himſelf, or are given of him in Scripture.*

(2) *By the Promiſes of his Word, which are of two ſorts:*

1. *Indefinite or irreſpective as to any particular Time of a Sinners Reformation.*

2. *Such as are made reſpectively to his Reformation at this very Time, and by this very Means; and theſe Promiſes are alſo two-fold,* viz. *Implicit, and Expreſs; both which are diſtinctly ſet down.*

(3) *By Inſtances or Examples of Notorious Sinners left upon Record by Name in Scripture, who being Reformed by Gods Judgements upon them, have found Mercy with God.* p. 230

Sect.

Sect. 44. *Two Queſtions anſwered:*

1 Q. *What particular Comforts or Benefits do accrue to ſinners upon their being reformed by Gods Judgements?*

To which is anſwered, Much every way, as,

1. *The Prevention of greater Puniſhments.*

2. *The Removal of Puniſhments incumbent.*

3. *The reſtoring or beſtowing of the contrary Bleſſings.*

4. *Pardon of Sin* (ſimpliciter loquendo,) *or Reconciliation with God, together with all the concurrent and conſequent Bleſſings thereof, both pertaining to the Life which now is, and to that which is to come.*

2 Q. Cui Bono? *Or to what purpoſe would it be for here and there a few to reform, the Generality continuing unreformed?*

In Anſwer hereunto is declared,

1. *That*

1. *That God is pleaſed ſometimes to do much for a Community, or Body of a Nation, for the ſake of a few, a Remnant of his holy ones.*

2. *However it fares with others, yet ſurely it will be well with every reforming and reformed Sinner*; and how well, *declared in ſeveral particulars, which do concern both this life and a better.* p. 235

Sect. 45. *Fourth and laſt Motive is, To conſider the Miſery and Miſchief of not being reformed by theſe things: This is demonſtrated from the Text it ſelf in theſe words*; [Then will I alſo walk contrary unto you, and will puniſh you yet ſeven times for your ſins:] *Whereupon five things are propoſed to conſideration*:

(1) *What the Lot or Doom of unreformed Sinners will be*, viz. *Aſſured Puniſhment.*

(2) *What manner of thing Puniſhment is*, viz. *A thing contrary to the Sinner*,

Sinner, and herein differing from Sin it ſelf, this being a thing natural and agreeable to him.

(3) *Who it is that hath undertaken to puniſh them,* viz. *Jehovah*; i. e. 1. *He that can do it, when perhaps no other can.* 2. *Who will, and who hath ſaid, and ſaid often, he will doe it.*

(4) *The Quality of their Puniſhment, that it will be in their own Kind,* i. e. *By his walking in his Way contrary to them, (as they in their Way did walk contrary to him;) wherein is ſhewed, How God doth this,* viz. *By his being as wilfully bent as they, he reſolving,*

1. *That ſuch as will not be reformed, ſhall not be reformed, neither by theſe things, nor by any other things:*

2. *That they ſhall be deſtroyed notwithſtanding any Entreaty or Entreaties to the contrary, whether by the Sinners themſelves, or by any others in their behalf.*

(5) *The*

(5) *The Quantity, Degree, or Measure of the Puniſhment expreſſed in the phraſe* [Seven times more,] *the Inflidion whereof is to be expected both here and hereafter, in this World, and in the World to come eſpecially.* p. 242

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ERRA-

ERRATA.

PAge 23. line *ult.* for *or* read *not*, p. 24. l. 5. for *part* r. *perill*, p. 27. l. 5. for *opis* r. *operis*, p. 55. l. 29. for *excession* r. *excision*, p. 83. l. 21. for *κατέκοιν* r. *κάτεκον*, p. 120. l. 30. for *Jubilum* r. *Jubilæum*, p. 122. l. 24. for *resoues* r. *resolves*, p. 125. l. 3. for *men* r. *mend*, p. 133. l. 3. for *evils* r. *wills*, p. 183. l. 26. for *to our* r. *or to our*, p. 189. l. 27. for *Prodi-* r. *Prodigal*, p. 228. l. 25. for *and so to have gained* r. *and so not to have gained*.

REFOR-

Reformation or Ruine.

Lev. 26, 23, 24.

And if ye will not be reformed by these things, but will walk contrary unto me, Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.

SECT. I.

THis 26th. Chapter of the third Book of *Moses* (according to the Greeks and Latines styled *Leviticus*, because a main part thereof concerns the function of the *Levites*) doth contain precepts, promises, and Threatnings; and all these in such variety, as that in allusion to those words of the Prophet *Isaiah*, (*ch.* 28, 9:) precept must be upon precept, *precept upon precept, and line upon line, line upon line*; I say in allusion to that manner of the Prophets expression, it may as

well fit, as truly be said, that we have in this chapter precept upon precept, promise upon promise, and threatning upon threatning; I cannot so well say in those additional words of the said Prophet [*Here a little and there a little*] but must say rather, we have much here and much there, and much every where; lesse indeed of precepts, but more of promises, and most of all of Threatnings; I say of Threatnings most of all, for those 26 verses together (from ver 14. to ver. 41.) are but as one continued threatning, or I may say of those verses, that they are a kind of deluge, and an inundation of threatnings, the latter like the waves of the Sea, still swelling above, and surmounting the former; so that the said 26 verses of this chapter may not unfitly be resembled to those waters of the Sanctuary, mentioned by the Prophet, *Ezekiel ch.* 47 3. which at first were onely to the ancles, but afterwards they rose to the knees, then to the loyns, and at last so high as to become impassable. Thus do the judgments of God, Threatned in the said verses, rise higher and higher one above another; as who should say, God threatens sinners with judgements, first to the ancles, then to the knees (*genuum renus*) then to the loins, then to utter ruine and desolation; breifly, first with lesser, and then with greater, and still with greater punishments.

The words of my Text are the fourth surge

or

or wave, raiſed by that Tempeſt of Divine threatnings (as I may ſo ſay) wherewith impenitent ſinners are juſtly purſued, in the aforeſaid verſes; and as for the particulars therein contained; I ſhall commend to obſervation Perſons and Things, and of each two.

1. Obſerve the two perſons, (*i.e.*) The Perſon threatning and the Perſons threatned, 1. The perſons threatned, intimated in the pronoun, *ye* *v.* 23. Qu. But who, or what manner of Perſons, or people were theſe? Anſ. See *Deu.* 32, 9. and 7. 9. *Pſal.* 148. laſt and 78, 71. and the Scriptures paſſive, wherein they are ſaid to be a choſen Generation, the Iſrael of God, Gods lot and portion, a Non-ſuch.

2. The perſon threatning ſpecified in the pronoun, *I*, *ver.* 24. Queſt. But who is this *I*? Anſw. Himſelf doth anſwer this queſtion, ſaying *ver.* 2. I am the Lord, and *ver.* 1. I am the Lord your God. It is *Jeh-vah* then, the Lord God of Iſrael, that doth thus threaten his own peculiar people.

(2.) As to things obſerve two particulars, the Thing or Things *for* which and *with* which they are threatned of God; 1. The things *for* which, are expreſſed in *ver.* 23. and by two kinds of expreſſions, *viz.* Metaphorical & without Metaphor [if ye will not be reformed by theſe things.] The word rendred, [reformed] ſignifies to be inſtructed, *ſi non eruditi fueritis*, or taught;

and the benefit of Divine chaſtiſements and puniſhments, is oft expreſſed by this word, *viz.* by a people being Taught and Inſtructed thereby, *Pſal.* 99. 12. *Bleſſed is the man, whom thou chaſteneſt O Lord, and Teacheth him out of thy Law, Jer.* 2. 30. *In vain have I ſmitten your Children, they received no Correction nor Inſtruction*, as the word doth alſo ſignifie, and which is the true ſence of the place; for whereas the tranſlation ſays [Correction] the meaning is, they received no Correction in, or as to the effect, or fruit of it, which regularly is inſtruction.

By [theſe things] are meant the puniſhments in the foregoing verſes threatned, ſuppoſing them to have been inflicted according to the tenor of the threatnings.

2dly. The thing for which they are threatned, is expreſſed in Metaphorical Language, *viz.* by the Metaphor of *walking*; a Metaphor of frequent uſe in Scripture, and of eaſie intepretation, by which every one doth preſently apprehend, that their actings, or doings are thereby meant. Our Works are frequently ſtyled our Wayes, and our Doings are called our Goings Only two things do ſeem to be conſignified by the Metaphor of Walking, I mean, do ſeem to be implyed, over and above a mans bare acting or doing, *viz.* Frequency and willingneſs. When we walk we are preſumed to do it willingly, and of choice; and that is ſaid to be a mans Walk, which

which he doth make his frequent exerciſe. And to walk contrary to God is all one as to walk contrary to his ſtatutes, Judgments and Commands, ſpecified, *v.* 15. or to hearken to God ſpeaking to us, an expreſſion oft uſed in this Chapter *v.* 14. 18. 21. And if ye will *walk* contrary to me, and will not hearken to me. To *walk* contrary to God is not to hearken to him.

2. Obſerve the thing, or things, with which they are theatned; theſe are alſo expreſſed two wayes or in two ſorts of Language, as were the things, for which they are threatned.

1. By way of Metaphor, *then will I alſo walk contrary to you.*

2. In plain Language, whereby the meaning of the Metaphor is unfolded, *Gods walking contrary unto them is*, being interpreted, *his puniſhing them yet ſeven times for their ſins.* So that the things, with which they are threatned is not puniſhment ſimply, or in the poſitive, but in a ſuperlative degree; puniſhment ſuperlative, much exceeding what had been formerly threatned and inflicted, I ſay much more; for that is the meaning of the expreſſion uſual in the Hebrew [*ſeven times*] Seven times, *i. e.* many times. *Numerus certus pro incerto, finitus pro infinito.* The number of Seven is of frequent uſe for a great number, as in *Pſ.* 119. 164. *Seven times in a day will I praiſe thee, i. e. many times, Prov.* 26, 16. *The ſluggard is wiſer in*

own conceit, than Seven men: i.e. *than many men, that can render a reason*; *So Prov.* 24. 16. To this purpose is the number of Seven used, when divided into three and four; for as three and four make the number Seven, so by Three and Four are meant a great number, this being a phrase oft used by the Prophet *Amos* ch. 1, 3, 6, 9, 13. Thus saith the Lord, for Three transgressions of *Damascus*, of *Gaza*, of *Tyre*, of *Edom*, and for Four *i.e.* for their many and manifold transgressions.

SECT. II.

HAving thus given forth a brief resolution and an explication of the termes and phrases in the text, it follows, that I commend to your notice several points of doctrine, observable from the said parts of the text. But before I do this, I shall choose to commend to observation one point of Doctrine, as observable from the whole of these two verses put together, the handling of which Doctrine (though I intend to do it more briefly) may make way in good sort to the main thing, or things as the drift and scope of the Text.

The two verses put together, are for the form of

of them a Commination, or as to their formal nature they are an expreſſe and ſevere Threatning, and upon that account you may perhaps ſay of or to me, as the Prophet did to *Jeroboams* Wife, I am come to you with heavy tidings. This if ſaid, I ſhall not altogether deny it, yet for the comfort of ſinners (how bad ſoever as to time paſt, and preſent) I ſhall ſay, that the tidings I am ſent unto you with, from God, are not heavy in ſuch a ſort or ſence, or ſo heavy as were the tidings of that Prophet to the wife of *Jeroboam*; for the Prophets commination was abſolute and peremptory, that whereof the Prophet brought unto her the heavy tidings, was threatned as unavoidable, and within a few hours to be executed, or to come to paſſe, which it did accordingly, 1 *King* 13, 14. *But when? even now, and ver.* 17. *And* Jeroboams *wife came to* Tirrah, *and when ſhee came to the threſhold of the door, the child dyed.* I am for my part no Prophet nor Prophets ſon, and God forbid, that I ſhould pretend to come unto any ſinners in the name of God with any ſuch peremptory and abſolute denunciation of divine judgements. Be it known therefore unto you, and that for the comfort of every ſinner, who, how bad ſoever at preſent, that yet bethinks himſelf, and by weeping croſs returns to God, be it known to you I ſay, that the threatning of my Text is only a conditional theatning,

wherein nothing is threatned but what may be avoided or escaped, such kind of formal Comminations are but in effect and force as severe Admonitions and Warnings, and indeed do go in Scripture under this very name or denomination, *Ezek.* 3. 17. *Son of man hear the word from my mouth, and give them Warning from me hereupon*, as St. *Paul* sayes to the *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* 4. 14. *I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you*, in like sort I say to you, I have not chose this text to affright any sinner with an amazing, distracting fear, and to drive him to despair, but as a Wel-wisher to his souls good and welfare I warne him; And to that purpose I shall commend to observation the following doctrine, viz. *the Lord is wont to Warn sinners before he doth punish them*; more especially observe, *that before God doth punish sinners with more than Ordinary Severity* (*q. d.* yet seven times for their sins) *he is wont to give them Warning upon Warning.*

SECT. III.

THe truth of this Doctrine is implyed in those words of God, *Jer.* 18. 7, 8. *At what instant I shall speak concerning a Nation, con-*

concerning a Kingdome, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it.---- God useth to speak destruction (*i. e.*) to threaten it to Nations and Kingdomes, before he doth down with them indeed, and destroy them, *Hos.* 6. 4. *I have hewed them by my Prophets, and slain them,* (how?) *by the words of my mouth* (i. e.) *by my threatnings of slaughter to, or against them.* Before God doth slay sinners, *ore Gladij,* with the mouth of the sword, he useth to slay them *gladio Oris,* with the sword of his mouth (*i. e.*) with the words or threatnings of his mouth, which should be looked upon (to speak in the words of the Psalmist in another case) as drawn swords. We read of two swords, the sword of *Elisha* and the sword of *Jehu,* 1 *King.* 19. 17. respectively thereunto I may say as St. *Peter* to our Saviour, *Ecce duo gladij,* beho'd there are two swords; But what manner of swords are they? what manner of sword that of *Jehu* was, we all Know and *Ahabs* house knew it with a Witness. But what manner of Sword was the Sword of *Elisha*? surely not such as was that of *Jehu*; for Prophets are no Soldiers, they are Gown-men, Book-men, no such sword-men as *Jehu* was. As by *Jehu's* sword (then) is meant the Execution of slaughter, so by *Elisha's* sword is meant his Denunciation of slaughter, it being the manner of Scripture-language to say of Gods Prophets, that they do that, which in Gods

Gods name they threaten ſhall be done, as appears by *Jer*, 1. 10. *See, I have ſet thee this day over the Nations, and over the Kingdomes, to root out, and to pull down, and to deſtroy and to throw down.* By *Eliſha*'s ſlaying (then) is meant his threatning with ſlaughter, and before God doth ſlay ſinners by the ſword of *Jehu*, he doth uſually ſlay them by the ſword of *Eliſha*. And as Kings have their Heralds to denounce War before they commence it ſo hath God his officers for the like purpoſes: Theſe Officers are ſtiled Watchmen, and their Office as to the exerciſe thereof is ſtyled, their Blowing of the Trumpet, *Ezek.* 33. 2, 3. And what is this their blowing of the Trumpet? ſee *Iſaiah* 58. 1. It is their lifting up their voice like a Trumpet, ſpeaking audibly, boldly and affectionately, telling people of their ſin and danger.---- See alſo *Ezek.* 3. 17. where their blowing of the Trumpet is interpreted their giving the people warning, from God, or in the name of God.

Reaſons.

First, One Reaſon may be taken from the Love and mercy and compaſſion of God towards ſinners, his Willingneſs to ſpare them, and his Lothneſs (as of himſelf) to puniſh and deſtroy them. This is it that the Scriptures do abundantly teſtifie of God, and that God doth teſtifie of himſelf, *Am.* 3. 33. *He doth not willingly grieve, nor afflict the Children of men*: 2 Pet. 3. 9. *God*

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is long-ſuffering to us-ward, not willing that Any ſhould periſh, but that All ſhould come to repentance. Moſt paſſionately affecting are thoſe words of God brought in by the Prophet *Hoſea*, ſpeaking of himſelf, *ch.* 11. 8. *How ſhall I give thee up* Ephraim? *how ſhall I deliver thee* Iſrael? *how ſhall I make thee as* Admah? *how ſhall I ſet thee as* Zeboim? *mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.* I was about to Paraphraſe a little upon thoſe words, but I thought meet rather to forbear, for as much as methinks, if I had the tongue of men and Angels, I could not more to the life expreſs Gods willingneſs to Spare, & his unwillingneſs, as of himſelf to deſtroy ſinners, than by the very words of God himſelf in that Scripture. And to the ſame purpoſe doth God teſtifie of himſelf, under his Oath, not only Saying but alſo Swearing, *As I live, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, & live.* Ez. 33. 11. Now this mercy & pity of God, is in all reſpects, or upon all accounts, the reaſon of the point in hand; for

1. It is the riſe, and fountain, or inward moving cauſe thereof; and in this nature it is mentioned and alleadged by the Chronologer, 2 *Chro.* 36. 15. *And the Lord God of their fathers ſent to them by his Prophets riſing betimes, and ſending them,* Why? *Becauſe he had compaſſion on his people, and on his dwelling place.* The Particle [Becauſe] in that place hath not meerly

meerly *Vim rationalem consequentiæ*, as in some other Scriptures, particularly in that of the Prophet *Ezekiel*, *ch.* 18. 28. *Because he considereth, and turneth away*------ but it hath *Vim causalem consequentis*; and in that respect it is more than a reason of the thing; for there may be severall reasons rendred for a thing, which cannot be said to be causes of it. But the cause of a thing consequent, is more than the reason of a Logical consequence.

2. The demonstration of the said love and compassion of God, is the final cause thereof. Hereby the said τὸ χρηστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ is manifested to sinners, and indeed to the whole world. The Fisher and Fowler, by stealing upon the Fish and Fowl, do declare that their direct will and intent was, to make a prey of them; But God by a contrary dealing with sinners, declares a contrary end, *viz.* that he was not willing that sinners should become a prey to his Justice, but that they should (as Lot out of *Sodom*) take wing, make haste and escape for their lives. It is not without manifest cause, that the Prophet stiles Gods punishing, or his punishments upon sinners, his strange Acts, and strange Works, *Isa.* 28. 21. they being such Acts and Works as, of himself, he is much alienated and estranged from.

Secondly, A secondary reason is, the demonstration of his Justice, in case, or upon supposition of a sinners not taking, but despising the warn-

warnings which he gives. God will be glorified one way or other, whatever the issue of his dealing with sinners prove to be; If the wicked will not give glory to Him, he will (as in the case of *Pharoah*) get himself honour upon them; And besides the honour of his mercy, and riches of his goodness and forbearance, he will get himself the honour of his Justice, in the ruine of those who have despised that his goodness. Hereupon he will be justified in his sayings, and clear when he judgeth, as is said *Psal.* 51. 4. *Rom.* 9. 21. *What if God, willing to make his wrath and his power known* (that is, to make his wrath known as well in the Justice, as in the power thereof) *endured with much long suffering the Vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.*

SECT. IV.

Use.

1. REprehension. What reproof and increpation are they worthy of, or rather be it said, what reproof are they not worthy of, who will give God no thanks for his mercifull warnings, yea who cannot, or will not abide or endure the hearing thereof? God warnes sinners, sends

ſends to them by his miniſters riſing betimes, and ſending them for that purpoſe, and upon that errand, becauſe he hath compaſſion upon them; But oh how few ſinners are there, who will ſo much as acknowledge the pity and kindneſs of God herein; the kindneſs, either of him that ſends, or of thoſe who are ſent! Oh the ſad and ſinfull entertainment of ſuch meſſages and meſſengers ſent from God! What the entertainment both of the meſſage and meſſengers by Gods Iſrael of old was, ſee by the report made thereof in 2 *Chro* 36. 16. *But they mocked the meſſengers of God, and deſpiſed his words, and miſuſed his Prophets.* Thus it was of old; and do Gods meſſengers and his meſſage find any better entertainment with the moſt of ſinners at this day, and in theſe our times? Conſider how many do make mocks and moes, and ſcoffe at Gods meſſengers for their warnings? And under how many Nick-names do many wicked people make them the Object of their ſcorn and deriſion? ſurely under more Nick-names than that of Preciſians, or that of Ba'd-pates, under which the ill nurtured Children at *Bethel* ſcofft at the Prophet *Eliſha*.

2. How are their Words deſpiſed? who regards their Warnings? As it fares with the Meſſengers, for the moſt part, ſo it fares with their Meſſage; both are alike deſpiſed and derided, inſomuch that the Prophet Jeremy's complaint

(*chap.*

(*chap.* 20. 8.) may be justly renewed, they saying, *The word of the Lord is made a reproach unto them, and a derision daily.* And it is the lesse wonder, that many should thus despise and make but a mock, both of Gods messengers and their message; because, in the doing of their Office they seem to sinners as *Lot* is said to seem to his Sons-in-law in a like case, or upon a like account of Giving Warning (*i. e.*) *as those who do but mock*, as if they were in jest and not in good earnest.

3. How are Gods Messengers abused for doing this their Office, and that both by word and deed? *e.g.*

1. Some are ready to cry out upon them as Legal Preachers, and such as preach not Jesus Christ, and the Gospel of Grace.

2. Others are ready to say; that the Minister preaches nothing but Damnation, Damnation, and this to affright people, to drive them out of their wits, and to make sinners to despair.

3. Others are ready to say, that the Minister himself is little better than mad, at least that he is somewhat *læsi cerebri*, a little craz'd & crack-brain'd. Thus were some of Gods Prophets of old taken to be, yea, our blessed Saviour

I know there is another Critical sence of the word [ἐξέστη] but this of our Translators doth seem sufficiently probable, and in which sence the word is used 2 *Cor.* 5. 13. *If we be Beside our selves.*

our was by some taken to be (for a fit) little better, and by those who had reason above many others to know him better, I mean, some of his kinsfolkes in the flesh *Mar.* 3. 21. they saying, that he was *Transported*, or *Beside himself*. And as *Achish* said of *David*, apprehending him to be in a fit of distraction 1 *Sam.* 21, 14. so are many apt to say of such Boanergeses, such Ministers as are more Zealous than their brethren ordinarily are in their warnings, *Have we need of Madmen*, that such furious Zealots should be sent unto us?

4. Others are ready to accuse them as Malignants, as those who are ill-willers to their people, yea, to the Church and Nation wherein they live. Thus was the Prophet Jeremy accused, as one that did not seek the welfare of the people, but their hurt *Jer.* 38. 4. And how was *Amos* accused by *Amaziah* the Priest, *Amos* 7. 10. *Amos*, saith he to King *Jeroboam*, *hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel*; *the Land is not able to bear all his words*.

5. Others are ready to Interdict and Threaten them, bidding them be silent, or threatning to take a course for their silencing; saying with them of old to their faithfull Seers, *Isa.* 30. 10. *See not*, *Prophesie not unto us right things*, *Prophesie unto us smooth things*, *Prophesie deceits*. And saying with *Amaziah* the King of *Judah* to the

the Prophet, *Forbear, wherefore ſhouldeſt thou be ſmitten*, 2 Chron. 25. 16.

Briefly, The moſt of Sinners love to be flattered; few can abide, or endure to be warned, *Jer. 5. lat.* But who can expreſs the ſin and folly of wicked Men in their ill Entertainment of Gods warnings? How juſtly may it be ſaid to them, as in *Deut.* 32. 6. *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O ye Fooliſh People, and unwiſe?* Is not God like a Father to you, in giving you warning? Is it not of his Fatherly kindneſs to give you ſo many warnings upon warnings? Now, alas, that God ſhould ſhew ſuch, and ſo much Compaſſion to ſinners, and that ſinners ſhould have no Compaſſion upon themſelves. What a pitiful caſe is this? Surely *Dives* in Hell did expreſs more pity to his five Brethren on Earth, than many, and many ſinners do here towards themſelves; for whereas he deſired, that one might be ſent from Hell to teſtifie unto (*i. e.*) to warn his Brethren, that they come not into that place of Torment: Theſe will not endure, that one ſent from Heaven ſhould ſo warn them, *Luke* 16. 27, 28.

SECT. V.

2. Exhortation.

1. TO the Miniſters and Meſſengers of God. In Gods Name let us do our Office, and do it impartially, as did that faithful Labourer, the Apoſtle St. *Paul*, *Col.*1.28. Teaching, every Man, ſays he, and warning every Man. Let us warn Young and Old, Poor and Rich; the beſt man in the Pariſh, as well as the pooreſt Labourer; the Lord of the Manor, as well as his poor Tenants, and rack-renters. As God ſaid to his Prophets of old, Be not afraid of the Faces, or diſmayed at the looks of the proudeſt Dame, the ſtouteſt Gallant. There are more with you, than againſt you. VVe being made of God Watch-men, let us blow the Trumpet (*i. e.*) Let us cry aloud, and ſpare not, ſpare none; lift up our voice like a Trumpet, and ſhew to ſinners their Tranſgreſſions; ſhew them in their proper Colours, ſhew them in their Kind, ſhew them in their Aggravations, and ſhew them in their Fruits, Iſſues, and Conſequents. Let us imagine God himſelf, who hath counted us Faithful, putting us into the Miniſtry, ſaying to us, as to the Prophet *Ezekiel*, Ezek. 3. 17. *Son of Man, I have made thee a Watch-man to the Houſe of* Iſrael; *therefore hear the word at my mouth, and*

and give them warning from me. Whether we please, or displease Men; whether People will hear, or whether they will forbear; let us continue in Gods Name to do the Office of Watchmen *(i. e.)* From time to time, and according to all emergencies to give warning.

SECT. VI.

2. A Second sort of Exhortation shall be to People, the People that are thus warned of God; if we as yet are not under any severe punishment, but onely warned thereof, let us acknowledge Gods great Pity and Kindness to us therein; blessing God, and speaking good of his Name upon that account. I shall bespeak every such sinner, in the words of the *Psalmist*, *Psal.* 100. 4. *O go your way into his Gates with thanksgiving, and into his Courts with praise, be thankful unto him, and speak good of his Name*: And as in *Psal.* 118. begin. *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, and because his Mercy endureth for ever. Let* Israel *now say, that his Mercy endureth for ever*: *Let the House of* Aaron *now say, that his Mercy endureth for ever*: *Let them now that fear the Lord, say, that his Mercy endu-*

reth for ever; to which I ſub-joyn, ſaying, Let them, who fear not God, yet ſay and acknowledge, that God is good, and that his Mercy endureth for ever. O reſolve, ſaying with the ſaid *Pſalmiſt*, *Pſal.* 16.7. *I will bleſs the Lord, who hath given me Counſel*; I will bleſs the Lord, who hath given me warning. This is more than God is neceſſitated, or obliged to do. It is purely of his courteſie to do it: For God can as eaſily ſmite, as ſpeak; puniſh us, as ſpeak a word of warning to us. Well may we acknowledge, and acknowledge with thankfulneſs the undeſerved favour of God in this thing, ſaying, with the *Pſalmiſt*, *The Lord hath not dealt with us after our ſins, nor Rewarded us according to our Iniquities*, Pſal. 103. 10.

SECT. VII.

IF after warnings being given of God, we ſmart for our ſins, if we are ſeverely puniſhed, let us not complain, but acknowledge the Juſtice of Gods ſore hand, *Lam.* 3. 39. *Wherefore doth a Living Man complain, a Man for the puniſhment of his ſin?* So long as it is for ſin, that Man is puniſhed, there is no juſt cauſe for any Living Man to complain. *David* ſays,

ſays, that being under Affliction, he was dumb and opened not his Mouth, (*i. e.*) In the way of murmuring and complaint, even upon this Conſideration, becauſe the Lord did it; much more ſhould the Conſideration of theſe two things ſtop our Mouths, and ſilence us as to complaining and murmuring, conſidering to wit, 1. Who doth it. 2. How he doth it; for as we may ſay unto God, with the *Pſalmiſt*, *Thou, Lord, didſt it*; ſo we may ſay farther, Thou, Lord, didſt it not without warning; yea, warning upon warning. And upon this Account let us not altogether, or in all Reſpects be dumb and ſilent, but let us open our mouths in a free acknowledgment of the Juſtice and Equity of God in his ſevere proceed ngs againſt us, ſaying, with the Church, as in *Nehem.* 9. 33. *Thou art juſt in all that is brought upon us, for thou haſt done right, but we have done wickedly.* And as in *Lam.* 1. 18. *The Lord is righteous, for I have Rebelled againſt his Commandment.* Let every ſinner ſay for himſelf and others in this caſe, as the good Thief upon the Croſs, I am, we are in this Condemnation juſtly, for we ſuffer but the due reward of our deeds. Well may we make this acknowledgment: for what more juſt, than that he, or they ſhould ſuffer and ſmart to purpoſe, who being warned, and warned again, would take no warning; who being warned, would not

be warned. In this caſe it becomes ſinners to ſay, not onely as did *Pharaoh*'s Magicians, concerning the Plagues of *Egypt*, (*Exod.* 8. 19. *Hic eſt digitus Dei, This is the Finger of God,*) but to ſay alſo, as did *Jehu* of that exemplary Judgment, which befel *Jezebel*, (2 *Kings* 9.32.) *Hoc eſt verbum Dei, This is the word of the Lord, which he ſpake* ----- Thus, or to this purpoſe let ſinners under their ſufferings acknowledge, ſaying, This is the word of the Lord, which he hath oft ſpoken in my hearing; I have been oft, and often told, and warned of this heavy Hand of God, and of theſe, and theſe ſins, which have now found me out. A little Grace will ſerve turn to produce ſuch an acknowledgment. If we had Grace ſo much as a grain of Muſtard-ſeed (to ſpeak in the Language of our Saviour) it were enough to make us confeſs as much as that comes to; even the workings of a Natural Conſcience have thus far prevailed with ſome ſinners: As *Reuben* ſaid to his Brethren, *Gen.* 42.22. *Spake I not unto you, ſaying, Do not ſin againſt the Child, and you would not hear; therefore behold alſo his Blood is required.* In this ſort are ſinners under ſore puniſhments, rated by their own Conſciences, ſaying, Did not the Lord warn thee, and ſpeak to thee, ſaying, Leave thy wicked Courſes, thy Drinking, Drabbing, Gaming, Curſing, Swearing -- but thou would'it

not

not hear? Therefore the vengeance threatned is now inflicted. God hath extorted such a Confession as this even from wicked Men, when they have been brought to, or laid upon the Rack, as we see in the Experiment of *Pharaoh*, who confessed, saying, *The Lord is Righteous, and I and my People are wicked*, Exod. 8. 19.

SECT. VIII.

3. BE Exhorted to like and Love God's Ministers never the worse, but the better rather for their warnings and admonitions. I shall Exhort you in the very words of the Apostle, saying, 1 *Thes.* 5. 12. *I beseech you, Brethren, know them that Labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in Love for their works sake.* To which I add, saying, as for the sake of all other their works; so for the sake of this kind, or part of their work, *viz.* their severe admonitions and warnings, especially considering touching this work the following particulars. It is their work, even the work 1. which God himself hath called them unto, and put into their hands. A Minister in this work is ot ἀλλοτριοπίσκοπος, a busie-body in what

concerns another, but not himſelf. The great and dreadful God hath ſet them thus to work; and he hath, 1. Commanded them to do it, and to do it to purpoſe, (*i. e.*) Throughly, even upon their part, ſaying, that otherwiſe the Blood of ſinners ſhall be required at their hands, *Ezek.* 3. 17, 18. See *Jer.* 1. 16, 17. *I will utter my Judgments againſt them touching all their wickedneſs, who have forſaken me --- Thou therefore Gird up thy Loyns and ariſe, and ſpeak unto them all that I Command thee; be not diſmayed at their Faces, leſt I confound thee before them.* So that well may a Miniſter ſay to himſelf in this Caſe, as St. *Paul* did, ſaying to himſelf, *Va mihi ſi non Evangelizavero*, 1 Cor. 9. 16. *Woe unto me, if I Preach not the Goſpel.* And let no prejudicate Perſon in his Ignorance Object, ſaying, This Threatning of Judgments to ſinners and thereby, or with ſuch ſeverities warning them, is not to Preach Chriſt and the Goſpel; For let ſuch Read what the ſame Apoſtle ſays, *Col.* 1. 28. Whom (meaning Jeſus Chriſt Crucified) we Preach, warning every Man.

2. As God hath Commanded Miniſters to do this work, ſo he hath promiſed to back them in it againſt all Oppoſers and Oppoſitions. *I am with thee*, ſays God to the Prophet *Jeremy*, *Chap.* 1. *laſt.* *Loe, I am with you*, ſays Chriſt to his Apoſtles, *Mat.* 28. *lat.* And there is encourage-

encouragement enough in thoſe few words (*Loe, I am with you*) *For if God be for us, who can be againſt us?* Rom. 8. 31.

2. Touching this their work, conſider what manner of work it is, *e. g.* It is a work and Labour of Love and true Friendſhip: For he is no true Friend, that flatters; but he that deals plainly and roundly. Let a wiſe man, even one of the wiſeſt of men, *Solomon*, Judge for us in this Caſe, *Prov.* 27. 5, 6. *Open Rebuke is better than ſecret Love: Faithful are the Wounds of a Friend, but the Kiſſes of an Enemy are deceitful.* I may ſadly ſay indeed, that this their work is miſtaken work, for too many ſinners do take it to be a work of Miniſters ſpight & ſpleen to be admoniſhed roundly of their ſins, and to be to'd of the vengeance of God that hangs over their heads upon that Account, that their ſin lyes at the door, like a ban-dog, ready to ſeize on them. As God himſelf ſays to *Cain*, Gen. 4. 7. But ſinners are wofully herein miſtaken. *Am I become your Enemy*, ſays St. *Paul*, *becauſe I tell you the truth?* Gal. 4. 16. *q. d.* I am not, I am not your Enemy upon that Account, and you may be aſhamed to think as you do. As St. *Paul* ſaid to the *Corinthians*, in a like caſe of prejudice they had againſt him, 2 *Cor.* 11. 14. So may God's Miniſters ſay, *Wherefore? becauſe We love you not? God knoweth.* Wherefore do

we

we tell ſinners of their ſin and danger? Is it becauſe we love them not? God knows, and knows the contrary, and it concerns ſinners to know it alſo.

3. Conſider, That this is profitable work. True, it is none of the moſt pleaſing work in it ſelf barely conſidered, there being ſomething in it, that is of an unpleaſing Nature, and for that Cauſe it is a work, that doth pleaſe neither Miniſters, nor People. Miniſters, if they were left to their choyce, would much rather be doing other work, they would rather be inſtructing and comforting their People, and they may appeal to God, ſaying, with the Prophet *Jeremy*, *Chap.* 17. 16. *We have not deſired the woful day, thou knoweſt.* And as for People, we muſt acknowledge, that as St. *Paul* ſaid, in the like work, to the *Corinthians*, 2 *Cor.* 12. 20. So may we ſay of our ſelves, in this our work of Admonition, That People do find us therein ſuch as they would not; ſo that in ſome reſpects this work is mutually diſpleaſing, both to us and you. But for all that, the work may be profitable: For what doth not pleaſe, may profit notwithſtanding. Yea, it may be truly ſaid, that however this their work proves to be in the iſſue thereof, it is nevertheleſs as to the tendency of it moſt profitable. That of *Solomon* (Prov. 14. 23. *In all Labour there is Profit*, (*i. e.*) Virtually, and in the tendency there-

thereof) is more eſpecially verified of this their Labour. No work, or Labour tends to ſuch, and ſo much Profit: For it tends, 1. Immediately, to the Converſion of ſinners. This is both *Finis opis & operantis*, Neh. 9. 26. *They ſlew thy Prophets, which teſtified againſt them, to turn them to thee*, Ezek. 33. 9. *If thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it* — 2. Conſequently, it tends to their Eternal Salvation, *Ezek.* 3. 18. *When I ſay to the wicked, thou ſhalt ſurely dye, and thou giveſt him not warning, nor ſpeakeſt to warn the wicked from his wicked way to ſave his Life.* So that as St. *Paul* ſaid, of the Magiſtrate, ſo I may ſay of the Miniſter, *viz.* In doing this part of his Office he is to thee (O ſinner, whoſoever thou art) the Miniſter of God for thy good, *Rom.* 13. 4.

SECT. IX.

4. BE Exhorted to give God's Miniſters the hearing of their Errand; as *Hezekiah* Exhorts his People, ſaying, 2 *Chron.* 30. 8. *Be ye not ſtiff-necked as your Fathers were*; ſo I ſay to you: Be not as your Fathers under the Old Teſtament were, who put away the ſhoulder, and ſtopped their Ears, and refuſed to hearken,

hearken, *Zech.* 7. 11. Give not God Occasion to Complain now, as in those times he did, saying, *Jer.* 6. 10. *To whom shall I speak and give warning, that they may hear?* God's warnings and admonitions call for sinners attention, *Hos.* 5. 1. *Hear ye this, O Priests, and hearken ye House of* Israel, *and give ye Ear, O House of the King.* Be as ready to hear, as God is to speak; and as *Samuel* was taught, so let us say, *Speak, Lord, for thy Servant heareth.* And having heard their Message, let sinners take heed of picking Quarrels with them upon that Score, as too too many do. Thus did *Herod* with *John the Baptist*, Mark 6. 19. Therefore had *Herod* a Quarrel with him, *viz.* Because he had warned him of his Incest, saying, *It is not Lawful for thee to have thy Brothers Wife.*

SECT. X.

5. LET us heed their warnings. There is a kind of hearing, which is no hearing (*Mat.* 13. 13. *Hearing they hear not*, says our Saviour) and such is that Hearing, which is not accompanied with Heeding. It is one thing to Hear warnings, and another to Heed them. Many

Many do the former, that do not the latter. See *Ezek.* 33. 4. where it is ſuppoſed, that the Watch-man blows the Trumpet, and the People Hear the ſound thereof, yet for all that do take no more heed, than if they had heard nothing, or had never been warned.

Q. What is it to heed the warnings of God by his Meſſengers?

Anſw. It Comprehends three things, to which I ſhall particularly exhort ſinners, *viz.* To believe them, To fear them, and To take warning by them. Be then exhorted, 1. To believe God's warnings, by what Meſſenger ſoever he ſends them. Give not Occaſion to God's Servants to Complain, with his Prophets of Old, ſaying, *Who hath believed our Report?* Eſay 53. 1. *Be not Mockers, leſt your Bands be made ſtrong,* Eſay 28. 22. Be not worſe than the *Ninivites*, who are ſaid to have believed God in the warnings of *Jonah*, Chap. 3. 5.

2. Fear God, and the words of God. Hear and fear. Be not worſe than thoſe *Egyptians*, *Exod.* 9. 20. who being warned to Houſe their Servants and their Cattle, are ſaid to have feared the word of the Lord. The contrary hereunto is to ſlight and deſpiſe God's warnings, this being the ſin of God's

Amos 3. 8. The Lion hath roared, who will not fear? In which ſaying God's threatnings are reſembled to the roarings of a Lion, which accordingly ought to be dreaded. *Jer.* 9. 4.

God's People of Old, which ſtands upon Record, 2 *Chron.* 36. 16. *They mocked the Meſſengers of the Lord, and deſpiſed his words.* O give not Occaſion to the Lords Meſſengers to Complain againſt you to him that ſent them, ſaying, in the words of *Nehemiah*, *Hear, O our God, for we are deſpiſed*, Chap. 4. 4. *Beware, leſt that come upon you, which is ſpoken of in the Prophets. Behold ye Deſpiſers, and wonder, and periſh*, Acts 13. 40, 41. Be not ye worſe than Devils in Hell, of whom it is ſaid, They believe and tremble, *Jam.* 2. 19. Imitate thoſe in *Ezra*'s time, who are ſaid to have trembled at the words of the Lord God of *Iſrael*. *Ezr.* 9. 4. Imitate *Hezekiah*, and thoſe in his time, whoſe practice is recommended for a pattern by thoſe Elders of the Land to a great Aſſembly, they ſaying, *Jer.* 26. 18, 19. *Micah the Morathite Prophecyed in the days of* Hezekiah, *King of* Judah, *and ſpake to all the People of* Judah, *ſaying, Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts,* Zion *ſhall be ploughed like a Field, and* Jeruſalem *ſhall become heaps, and the Mountain of the Houſe as the High places of the Forreſt. Did* Hezekiah, *and all* Judah, *put him at all to death? Did he not fear the Lord, and beſought the Lord?* And obſerve the bleſſed iſſue thereof, reported in the following words, *And the Lord Repented him of the Evil which he had pronounced againſt them.*

3. Be exhorted to take the warnings, which God gives. When God gives warning, let sinners take it, and make the best of it. (*i.e.*) Let them turn from their wicked ways, that God may Repent of the Evils pronounced against them; let them turn to God, that God may turn to them. As the Lord said to *Jerusalem*, Jer. 13. *last. Woe unto thee, O* Jerusalem, *wilt thou not be made clean? When shall it once be?* In like sort let every sinner, that hath heard the sound of the Trumpet, and the frequent warnings of God, imagine him as in the up-shot thus, saying, Woe unto thee, O sinner, O Drunkard, Oh thou Swearer, O thou Proud and worldly wretch, O thou Adulterer and Adulteress --- Wilt thou not be warned? When shall it once be? What? always warned and never warned? Shall warning upon warning be still given, and yet never taken? O when shall that be once taken, that hath been so oft given?

SECT. XI.

Motives.

LET three things be Considered, 1. The uncertainty of God's warnings. There are two

two things, which sinners have no certainty of. 1. They are not certain how long they shall be in a Condition of being warned, (*i. e.*) How long they shall Live: For who knows, what a few days, yea, what one day may bring forth, *Prov.* 27. 1. Yet a little while and sinners will be past warning. *To him that is joyned to the Living there is hope*, Eccl. 9. 4. But when we are under ground, when once we are Lodged in our cold Earth, we are in no hope, in no Capacity of being warned; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the Grave, whither we are all going, *Eccl.* 9. 10. Go to now, ye sinners, that say, you mean to mend at such and such a time, you intend to turn over a new leaf when you have sown your wild Oats, when you have got a Wife, and settled in the World, when your Youthful time is a little over --- *Whereas ye know not what shall be on the Morrow: For what is your Life? Is it not a Vapour, that appeareth for a very little while, and then vanisheth away?* James 4. 13, 14. *Man knoweth not his time* (the most knowing man knows not his time) *as the Fishes are taken in an evil Net, and as the Birds are caught in the Snare, so are the Sons of Men Snared in an evil time, when it comes suddenly upon them*, Eccl. 9. 12.

2. Sinners are not certain, though they Live, how long God will continue to warn them at the

the rate they have been warned. Even in this Reſpect alſo man knoweth not his time, in alluſion to thoſe words of the *Pſalmiſt*, (*Pſal.* 74. 9. *There is no more any Prophet, neither is there among us any that knoweth how long.*) I may ſay, There is no ſinner that knoweth, or can Prophecy, how long (*i.e.*) how long God will continue to warn him; for God's Spirit will not alway ſtrive with ſinners, *Gen.* 6. 3. There is a two-fold ſtriving of God with man, *viz.* In Mercy and in Judgment; in this latter Reſpect, God's not ſtriving with man is promiſed as a favour, *Eſay* 57. 16. But in the former Reſpect, it is threatned as a Judgment, *viz.* God's not ſtriving with ſinners by Counſels, Reproofs, Admonitions, warnings, whether by his Miniſters, the Preachers of Righteouſneſs (ſuch as *Noah* was in his Generation) or by the inward motions, or excitations of his Spirit in the Hearts and Conſciences of ſinners. As there is a time for all things, and a ſeaſon for every purpoſe under Heaven, ſo there is a ſeaſon for God's gracious treating with ſinners, and there is a time when he will leave off to treat with them; and what ſinner having preſent warning, can ſay to the contrary, but that this may be the laſt?

2. Conſider the miſchief, or miſchievous Conſequence of not Heeding God's warnings, of not taking the warnings which God gives:

I mean, the woful consequences thereof, both in respect of sin and punishment, *e. g.* 1. In respect of sin, it doth much aggravate the sin of sinners. Their sin doth by this Occasion become (to speak in the words of the Apostle, *Rom.* 7. 13. καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἁμαρτωλὸς) Hyperbolically sinful, sinful in a very high degree, sinful with a witness. The sins of God's People of Old, both of *Israel*, and of *Judah*, are charged upon them, as aggravated by this sad Circumstance. See 2 *Kings* 17. 12, 13. *They Served Idols, whereof the Lord had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing. Yet the Lord testified against* Israel, *and against* Judah, *by all the Prophets, and by all the Seers, saying, turn ye from your evil ways, and keep ye my Commandments and my Statutes, according to all the Law, which I Commanded your Fathers, and which I sent to you by my Servants the Prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but* .... And if ever God shall open the Eyes of sinners, to see their sin in its proper Colours, and touch their Consciences with remorse for it, they will in like sort lay load upon themselves (*i.e.*) Charge their sin upon themselves as aggravated by the said Circumstance: Thus the People of God did in the Confession of their sin upon solemn Fasting days; of which, see *Nehem.* 9. 26. *Nevertheless they were Disobedient, and Rebelled against thee, and cast thy Law behind their*

backs, and ſlew thy Prophets, which teſtified againſt them, to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations; and v. 30. *Yet many years didſt thou forbear them, and teſtifiedſt againſt them by thy Spirit in thy Prophets; yet would they not give Ear.*

SECT. XII.

2. CONſider the miſchievous Conſequence of this ſin in Reſpect of puniſhment, which miſchief is three-fold; for it doth both neceſſitate, and Precipitate, and aggravate God's Judgments upon ſinners. 1. It doth neceſſitate Judgment, making it unavoydable; whereas before it was Conditional: Now (the Condition of eſcaping it being not performed) it becomes abſolute, according to the Rule which Civilians give us for the Interpretation of Conditional Promiſes and Threatnings, they ſaying, That when the Condition thereof is performed, or not performed, then the ſaid promiſe and threatning do become Abſolute. And as our Lawyers ſay, There is abundance of Reaſon in our Law, ſo I may truly ſay, There is enough of Reaſon ever obvious in that ſaid determination in the Civil Law. See 2 *Chron.* 36. 16, 17. *But they mocked the Meſſengers of*

the Lord, and despised his words, and mis-used his Prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no Remedy. Be sinners never so sinful, yet while they have not stood out against warnings, it may be rationably said, there is a Remedy for the preventing the Execution of Divine wrath, *viz.* By God's giving, and by sinners their taking warning; but when no warning given will be taken, this makes a sinners Case to be remedileſs. Then we may say, *Conclamatum est*; then may we say of a Church and Kingdom, as he in the Comedy said of a Prodigal, wasting Family, *Ipsa si cupiat salus servare hanc familiam, prorsus non potest*; Mercy it self cannot save sinners in this Case.

2. It doth precipitate, or haſten Judgment, *Prov.* 29. 1. *He that being often Reproved hardneth his Neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without Remedy.* That one Scripture proves the Truth of both the said things here Asserted, *viz.* That a sinners not taking warning, doth both necessitate and precipitate his ruine. This sin of not taking warning is like the last stroke, or blow of the Ax, which cuts down the Tree; though many, and many blows are stricken before the Tree falls; yet there is one blow, *viz.* the last, which doth immediatly cut it down: Even so, although many and many sins do meritoriously co-operate to God's bring-

bringing down Judgments upon sinners, nevertheless it is sinners their not taking warning, which doth immediately, and proximately effect it. Hence it is, that presently upon the Relation of sinners their guilt in this kind; the very next thing we read, or hear of them, is, the powring forth of God's Judgments upon them. See 2 *Chron.* 36. 16,17. *But they mocked the Messengers of the Lord, and despised his words, and mis-used his Prophets, untill the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no Remedy: Therefore he brought upon them the King of the* Chaldees, *who slew their Young Men with the Sword*---- And *Nehem.* 9. 26, 27. *Nevertheless they were disobedient, and Rebelled against thee, and cast thy Law behind their backs, and slew thy Prophets, which testified against them, to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations.* Now Observe what doth instantly follow upon this their sin, *v.* 27. *Therefore thou deliveredst them into the Hand of their Enemies, who vexed them.*

3. It doth Aggravate Judgment. No less upon grounds of Justice can be expected then that that, which doth aggravate the Sin of sinners, should aggravate their Punishment. *For*, Job. 34. 11. *the work of a man will God render unto him, says Elihu, & cause every Man to find according to his ways, (i. e.)* not onely according to their ways respectively to their kind (good or evil)

but Reſpectively to their degree alſo (whether very good, or very evil.) See *Ezek.* 2.5. *And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, yet ſhall know, that there hath been a Prophet among them,* (*i. e.*) A Prophet, who did the Duty of a Faithful Prophet among them, (*i. e.*) Did hear the Word from the Mouth of God, & did warn them from him. *q.d.* They that know, that they had warning; know it (*i. e.*) with a witneſs; know it to their coſt, know it with a vengeance.

Queſt. But what will be the peculiar miſery of ſuch ſinners, who will take no warning?

Anſw. See *Ezek.* 33.4,5, *Then whoſoever Heareth the ſound of the Trumpet, and taketh not warning, if the Sword come and take him away, His Blood ſhall be upon his own Head. He heard the ſound of the Trumpet, and took no warning, his blood ſhall be upon him.* Obſerve how the matter is repeated, He heard, he heard the ſound of the Trumpet. He took, he took no warning. His Blood, his Blood ſhall be upon him, upon his own Head. This is the difference betwixt the miſery of him who was not warned, and him that took not warning; both of them dye in their Iniquity, but whereas the Blood of the former ſhall be required at the Hand of him who ſhould have given, but did not give warning: The Blood of the latter ſhall be upon his own Head, (*i. e.*) none

ſhall

ſhall Anſwer for his Ruine but himſelf, he ſhall have none to blame, none to lay the blame of his Ruine upon, but himſelf. To ſuch a ſinner more eſpecially it may be ſaid, yea, ſuch a ſinner more eſpecially may ſay to himſelf, as in *Hoſ.* 13. 9. O ſinner, thou haſt undone thy ſelf, Thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf: Thou, and thou alone; Thou, and none but Thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf. This ſin, in not taking warning, doth ſilence ſinners under God's hand of puniſhment, and ſtop their mouths from complaining upon any but themſelves, which to do is ſome kind of eaſe to a Sufferer. I mean, Men under ſufferings do in ſome ſort eaſe themſelves, by uttering their juſt complaints againſt others, who have been partial cauſes at leaſt of their Calamity. But the ſinner, who would take no warning, hath no place for ſuch Complaints. Of any ſinners ſuch ſinners will prove their own Tormentors.

SECT. XIII.

3. FOR a third and laſt Motive, conſider the benefit of taking warning when given; for which, ſee *Ezek.* 33. 5. *But he, that taketh warning, ſhall deliver his Soul.* What

more can in few words be said, whereby to express the benefit of giving warning on the Watch-man's part, than this, *viz.* He hath delivered his Soul, as in *v.* 9. And the benefit of taking warning on the Peoples part, than this, *viz.* They shall deliver their own Souls? This implyes, that our Souls do lye at stake in this matter; the losing, or saving of the Souls of sinners doth depend upon their taking, or not taking warning; as sinners would deliver their Souls, so it concerns them to take the warnings which God gives.

Quest. What is meant by [Soul] in that place?

Answ. The Soul is taken in a two-fold sence.

1. Sometimes for Life, and thus frequently, both in the Old and New Testament, *Psal.* 116. 8. *Thou hast delivered my Soul, (i. e.)* my Life, *from death.* Thus the word is both used and Interpreted, *Psal.* 26. 9. *Gather not my Soul with sinners, nor my Life with bloody men.* 1 Thes. 2. 8. *So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God onely, but also our own Souls, (i. e.)* our Lives, as is his Expression, *Acts* 20. 24. *But none of these things move me, neither count I my Life dear to my self, so that* ——

2. It is taken for that more Excellent part of Man, which together with the Body doth constitute

ſtitute the *Compoſitum*, or make up the whole Man, *Mat.* 16. 26. *What is a Man profited, if he gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul? Or what ſhall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul?* Now, the word in the ſaid Text may well be taken in both the ſaid ſences. *q. d.* He ſhall ſave his Life in this World, he ſhall eſcape that temporal Ruine, which ſhall light upon thoſe who would take no warning, and he ſhall ſave his Soul from everlaſting Deſtruction in the World to come.

Briefly, by Soul, in the Language of this Prophet, as alſo oft-times in other Scriptures is meant Man himſelf, Body and Soul. See *Chap.* 14. 14. with *v.* 16. *Though theſe three Men*, Noah, Daniel, *and* Job *were in it, they ſhould deliver but their own Souls, by their Righteouſneſs, ſaith the Lord God.* Their own Souls, (*i. e.*) themſelves, as appears by the Expreſſion, *v.* 16. *They onely ſhall be delivered.* This then is the benefit of ſinners their taking warning, *viz.* The ſaving of themſelves, Body and Soul, both in this World, and in the World to come.

Queſt. But how can the ſinner himſelf be ſaid to ſave alive, or deliver his own Soul? As the *Phariſees* ſaid to our Saviour, who can forgive ſins, but God onely? In like ſort, ſome are ready to Object againſt the Prophet, ſaying, who can ſave Souls, but God onely?

Anſw. I

Answ. I shall take Occasion from hence, to Commend to Observation that 22*th.* Canon, which the most Excellent *Glassius*, in his *Philologia Sacra*, doth give concerning the use of Verbs Active in Scripture, both in the *Hebrew* and *Greek* Language. *Activa Verba tribuuntur illis quæ non propriissime, & influxu proximo id agunt, quod Verba significant, sed certâ tantum ratione concurrunt.* We are said in Scripture to do those things, which we neither do, nor can effect, but towards the effecting whereof we are onely means, or Instruments under God, onely doing such things towards the effect, as are *Intra sphæram Activitatis nostræ*, (*i.e.*) which do belong to us in our places and Calling to do. In which sence, or upon which account, a Christian, by Brotherly Advice and Reproof, is said to save a Soul from Death, *Jam.* 5. *last.* And a faithful Minister, by his good Life and Doctrine, is said to save both himself, and those that hear him, 1 *Tim.* 4. 16. In a like sence, and upon the like Account is a sinner that takes warning, said, to save, or deliver his own Soul. This then is the great and unspeakable benefit of taking warning when it is given of God, which because it is such a word of Comfort, and forasmuch as being willing in such sort to conclude this point, I cannot possibly make a more comfortable Conclusion thereof, I shall close it with the words of the Apostle,

speaking

ſpeaking of another very Comfortable Subject, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 18. [*Wherefore let us Comfort one another with theſe words.*] Let us Comfort our ſelves, and Comfort one another with thoſe words; or becauſe the word παρακαλεῖτε there uſed by the Apoſtle, doth ſignifie both to comfort, and to exhort; and becauſe it is a Preachers Duty to ſpeak both to Edification, and Exhortation, and Comfort, I will chooſe to Conclude the Doctrine in hand, ſaying, Let us both Comfort one another, and Exhort one another to take the warnings, which from time to time are given us in the Name of God, with thoſe words of the Prophet *Ezekiel*, ſaying, *But he that taketh warning ſhall deliver his Soul.*

SECT. XIV.

HAving handled, and gone through with that Doctrine, which I thought Obſervable from the whole of the two Verſes put together, and as conſidered in their formal Nature of a Conditional Commination, (*i. e.*) a ſevere Admonition, or Warning; I come now to Commend to you ſeveral points of Doctrine obſervable from their particular parts and expreſſions

preſſions therein. Let then the following points of Doctrine be thence Obſerved, and as of pregnant implication therein.

And if ye will not be Reformed by theſe things. Whence Obſerve,

1. The Direct Scope, or End of God's puniſhing, ſin is the Inſtruction, or Reformation of the ſinner. In ſaying [*If ye will not be reformed by theſe things.*] *Moſes* doth imply, that Reformation by thoſe things was the End, why the things were inflicted upon them.

2. It is not unlawful, or a thing unbecoming ſinners to Reform their wicked Courſes, being wrought thereunto by the fear, or feeling of Divine puniſhments: By the fear of them, when threatned; or by the ſmart, and feeling thereof, when inflicted.

3. It is not too late for ſinners to Reform, or to be Reformed, albeit, they are under the ſevere, or puniſhing hand of God.

4. It is not any Puniſhment, be it never ſo ſevere, though ſeven times greater than any formerly inflicted, that can of it ſelf Reform the ſinner. For, ſome ſinners are ſo exceeding bad, that what-ever they ſuffer, they will not mend, or be Reformed.

5. The immediate and great Reaſon, why ſinners are not Reformed by the Judgments of God upon them, is, becauſe they Will not be Reformed.

But will walk contrary unto me. Whence Observe,

6. That sin, especially sinning notwithstanding sufferings for them, is a walking contrary to God.

Then will I also walk contrary unto you. Whence Observe,

7. That as sin is a thing contrary to God, so suffering is that which is contrary to the sinner.

8. God doth sometimes pay sinners home in their own Coyn, or punith them in their own kind. He doth punish contrariety with contrariety. As contrary walking on their part was their sin, so contrary walking on his part shall be their punishment. If sinners be cross to God, God will be cross to them.

And will punish you yet seven times for your sins. Whence Observe,

9. If sinners suffer, it is for their sins. A sinners sufferings are undoubtedly for his sins.

10. All punishments are from God. A sinners sufferings are *Jehovah*'s doings. I'le punish you, or smite you, as the word in the Original (*Hiccethi*) doth primarily signifie; so that the Doctrine thence may be thus not unfitly worded, A sinners sufferings are the Lords smitings.

11. They that sin against God, shall suffer from him, whoever they be, be they otherwise

wise never so near, or dear to him. No priviledge or external prerogative can protect, or exempt a wicked People from the punishing Hand of God. I'le punish *You*, (*i. e.*) You my Lot and Portion, You, mine Inheritance, You, whom I have chosen to be a special People unto me, above all People that are upon the face of the Earth.

12. It is not any kind, or manner of sinning, or failing in Duty, but it is a wilful Course of sin, or sinning, which doth provoke Almighty God, the Lord *Jehovah* to severity in punishing. If God doth punish seven times more, it is for three Transgressions, and for four, (*i. e.*) For Iterated Transgressions, for Sinful Walks. *If ye walk contrary* ....

13. The more sin, the more punishment still. Or, The more sinning after, or under Divine punishment, the more punishment for such sin, or sinning is by the Lord threatned, by the sinner deserved, and therefore to be expected. This last I judge to be the main point Observable, and that wherein (as I may so say) lyes the Heart of the Text. And I shall for that Cause pass by all the other Observations: I mean, not handle them in ample sort, or Doctrinal-wise (as in our Sermons we are wont) but will enlarge my Discourse onely concerning the last Observation. And I shall the rather confine my self thereunto, because in a due handling,

handling thereof all the other may ſooner, or later; in one place, or other be fitly reſumed and touch'd upon with ſome brief Illuſtrations, and application.

In the handling of the ſaid laſt and main Obſervation from the Text, I will Obſerve this Method, ſpeaking, 1. In the way of Explication. 2. Of Confirmation. 3. Application thereof.

SECT. XV.

1. FOR Explication, I ſhall Anſwer the following Queſtion; What is the more Diſtinct and full importance of the phraſe ſeven times? *Anſw.* The phraſe hath already in general-wiſe been explicated, and it hath been determined to ſignifie much more puniſhment, than formerly was inflicted; but I ſhall now expreſs ſundry particular ways, or manners, how, or reſpectively whereunto God may be ſaid to puniſh a Perſon, or a People ſeven times, (*i. e.*) many times more than formerly, *e. g.*

1. When he doth multiply Judgments, or puniſhments of the ſame kind upon them; as when he doth inflict pains and Diſeaſes upon every Limb almoſt, and Member

1. Extenſive.

ber of the Body, a *Capite ad Calcem*, from the Crown of the Head to the Sole of the Foot, as is threatned, *Deut.* 28. 35. *The Lord ſhall ſmite thee in the Knees, and in the Legs with a ſore Botch, that cannot be healed, from the ſole of thy Foot to the top of thy Head.* So when God doth puniſh a Nation throughout, all ſorts and degrees of Perſons ſuffering alike, or in a great meaſure, as is threatned, *Eſay* 24. 1, 2. *Behold the Lord maketh the Land empty, and maketh it waſte, and turneth it upſide down, and ſcattereth abroad the Inhabitants thereof. And it ſhall be, as with the People, ſo with the Prieſt; as with the Servant, ſo with his Maſter; as with the Maid, ſo with her Miſtreſs; as with the Buyer, ſo with the Seller; as with the Lender, ſo with the Borrower; as with the taker of Uſury, ſo with the giver of Uſury to him.* Such a puniſhment as this, ſeems to be meant in thoſe Expreſſions of the ſame Prophet, concerning the Body politique, *Eſay* 1. 5, 6. *The whole Head is ſick, and the whole Heart is faint: From the ſole of the Foot, even unto the Head, there is no ſoundneſs in it, but Wounds and bruiſes, and putrifying ſores, they have not been cloſed, nor bound up, neither mollified with Ointment.* Sometimes one part of a Kingdom ſuffers, and ſometimes another; whether by Drought, Plague, noyſome and Infectious Diſeaſes, War ------ Sometimes the City, and ſometimes the Countrey;

try; sometimes one City, and sometimes another; sometimes a People suffer by one Neighbour-Nation in enmity against them, and sometimes another: But when a Judgment extends to all Corners and Quarters of a Nation, when it toucheth the Copy-hold of every one (Laity and Clergy, Gentlemen and Tradesmen, Lords and Commons, Prince and People) or when many Neighbour-States and Potentates do combine together against a Nation, when God doth joyn their Enemies together; some before, and some behind (as is the threatning, *Esay* 9. 11, 12, *The* Syrians *before, and the* Philistines *behind, and they shall devour* Israel *with open Mouth.*) some by Land, and some by Sea; then, or in the like Cases may God be said to punish a People seven times for their sins. Such a Multiplicity of Judgments of the same kind we may Read of in many Scriptures, both as threatned unto, and Executed upon a sinful People, *Jer.* 48. 8. *And the Spoyler shall come upon every City, and no City shall escape; the Valley also shall perish, and the Plain shall be destroyed, as the Lord hath spoken,* 2 Kings 24. 2. *And the Lord sent against King* Jehoiakim *Bands of the* Chaldees, *and Bands of the* Syrians, *and Bands of the* Moabites, *and Bands of the Children of* Ammon, *and sent them against* Judah --- Thus may God be said to punish seven times more *Extensivè,*

or as to the Extent, and ſpreading of a Judgment.

2. *Intenſivè.* 2. When God doth intend, or increaſe one and the ſame Judgment upon the ſame places, or Perſons (Increaſe it I mean in the degree, or degrees thereof) then may he be ſaid to puniſh ſeven times more. Thus may he be ſaid to puniſh ſeven times more *Intenſivè*, *e.g.* When God doth puniſh a Nation with a more grievous Famine every following Year, than the fore-going (ſuch was the ſeven Years Famine of *Egypt* in the time of *Joſeph*'s Preſidency there) or with a more grievous Plague, or War, than in the days of former Kings, or their Anceſtors; when God makes his Arrows drunk with Blood, and his Hand takes hold on Judgment; as are thoſe terrible Expreſſions, *Deut.* 32. 41, 42.

3. *Protenſivè.* 3. When God doth lengthen out one and the ſame Judgment upon a People, (be it Plague, or Famine, or Sword) Year after Year, and makes it of longer continuance than formerly. Then may God be ſaid to puniſh ſeven times more *Protenſivè*. This is it, which God threatens, *Deut.* 28. 59. *Then will the Lord make thy Plagues wonderful, and the Plagues of thy Seed, even great Plagues, and of long Continuance, and ſore ſickneſſes, and of long Continuance.*

This

This alſo is to be underſtood in all ſuch Scriptures, where the Puniſhments which are threatned by God, or inflicted by him upon a Perſon or People, are ſaid to be incurable; for that which is incurable, muſt needs be long and tedious, *Mic.* 1. 9. *Her Wound is incurable*, Jer. 30. 12. *Thus ſaith the Lord, thy Bruiſe is incurable, and thy Wound is grievous.* And v. 15. *Why cryeſt thou for thine Affliction? Thy ſorrow is incurable.* Thus doth God puniſh many vicious Men and Women, as he did wicked *Jehoram*, in their Bones and Bowels, with incurable Diſeaſes; 2 *Chron.* 21. 18. Sometimes Judgments lye upon a People for a ſhorter, and ſometimes for a longer ſpace of time, as it was with Gods People in the time of the Judges, they being Oppreſſed by one Neighbour-King (*Cuſhan-Riſhathaim*, King of *Meſopotamia*) eight Years, *Judg.* 3. 8. By another, (*Eglon*, King of *Moab*) eighteen Years, *ver.* 14. By another (*Jabin*, King of *Canaan*) Twenty Years, *Chap.* 4. 3. By another (the Neighbouring *Philiſtines*) Forty Years, *Judg.* 13. 1. Thus when God doth continue any puniſhment longer than uſually heretofore, then may he be ſaid to puniſh a People ſeven times more for their ſins.

4. When God doth inflict Judgments of another kind, than heretofore, when God doth add one

4. *Cumulative.*

kind of Judgment to another, when as ſinners do add ſin to ſin, one kind of ſin to another; ſo God doth add one kind of Judgment to another. As God hath variety of Judgments for various ſins, ſo doth God threaten ſinners accordingly with the ſame. See *Deut.* 32. 23. *I will heap miſchiefs upon them, I will ſpend mine Arrows upon them.* Thus may God be ſaid to puniſh ſinners ſeven times more *Cumulative*, when he cauſes Miſchiefs to come upon them thick and three-fold, like *Job*'s Meſſengers, one upon the heels of another. Under this Head may be compriſed, or unto it may be referred that ſad and Reproachful Condition of a People, when they lye down under ſhame as well as ſorrow; when God doth puniſh them with ſhameful, as well as painful ſufferings: As in the Lords hand, ſays *David*, there is a Cup, and it is full of mixture; ſo in his hand there is a Quiver, and it is full of Arrows (*i. e.*) of various Judgments, reſpectively whereunto ſinners may be ſaid to be the But, or Mark at which he ſhoots, *Pſal.* 7. 3. and 38. 2. *Thine Arrows ſtick faſt in me.* When God doth puniſh them in ſuch ſort, as to expoſe them to the ſhame and ſcorn, Reproach and contempt of their Neighbour-Nations, whether Enemies, or Confederates. This is that kind of Puniſhment (it being a concomitant uſually of other Judgments) which God doth threaten to a ſinful Nation. See *Jer.* 29.

29. 18. Where God threatens to make them an hiſſing, and a Reproach among their Enemies, to whoſe Power they ſhould be ſubjected. This ſeems to be implyed in *Deut.* 18. 44. Where God threatens his People for their ſins, with this Curſe among others, That their Enemies ſhould be the Head, and they ſhould be the Tail, (*i. e.*) They ſhould with ſhame truckle under the power of their Enemies. This alſo is implyed in thoſe Scriptures, where God threatens to weaken, and bring down the Power of a Nation (that boaſted, and truſted to their own ſtrength, and the ſtrength of their Confederates, truſting in an Arm of Fleſh) in a moſt ſhameful manner, by weak means, and by thoſe, whoſe Force they did contemn, even in ſuch ſort as *Goliath* did defie *David*; or as *Sennacherib* did *Hezekiah*, *Ezek.* 30. 3. This is that kind of puniſhment, which God's People have grievouſly ſuffer'd and lamented under, *Pſal.* 44. 13, 14. *Thou makeſt us a Reproach to our Neighbours, a Scorn and a Deriſion to thoſe that are round about us. Thou makeſt us a by-word among the Heathen, a ſhaking of the Head among the People*; *My Confuſion is continually before me, and the ſhame of my Face hath covered me.* And *Pſal.* 80 6. *Thou makeſt us a ſtrife to our Neighbours, and our Enemies Laugh among themſelves*, Pſal. 79. 4. and Jer. 3. *last. We lye down in our ſhame, and our*

Confusion covereth me. Now, this is a very sore punishment, and as hardly born as almost any, and in regard whereof the Church doth exceedingly lament her low Condition, as appears, *Lam.* 2. 15, 16. *All that pass by clap their Hands at thee, they hiss and wag their Head* —

To this Head also may be referred the Judgment of God upon sinners, as to their good Names, making their Names to rot, and stink above ground, according to that Proverb of *Solomon*, *Chap.* 10. 7. *The memory of the Just shall be blessed, but the Name of the Wicked shall rot.*

But more especially to this Head may be referred God's punishing sinners over and above with spiritual Judgments, depriving them of the means of Grace, his Sabbaths, Word, and Ordinances. This is a sore Judgment indeed, and oft threatned for the sins of a wicked People, *Amos* 8. 11. *Behold, saith the Lord God, the days come, that I will send a Famine in the Land; not a Famine of Bread, nor a thirst for Water, but of hearing the Word of the Lord; and they shall wander from Sea to Sea, and from the North even to the East, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.* So *Mat.* 21. 43. *The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a Nation bringing forth the Fruits thereof.* When God doth

doth thus add ſpiritual Judgments to temporal, then he may be truly ſaid to puniſh ſinners ſeven times for their ſins.

5. When God doth plague ſinners, not onely in their Perſons, but alſo in, or as to their Poſterity, either by giving them no Iſſue at all, or elſe ſuch as are worſe than none, perhaps, two-fold more the Children of Hell, than themſelves, then may God be ſaid to puniſh ſinners ſeven times for their ſins. And this is that puniſhment which God doth oft-times in Scripture threaten to ſinners, *viz.* To viſit the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children, to cut off the Remembrance of them from the Earth, to blot out their Name from under Heaven, that in the next Generation following their Name ſhall be blotted out, That the Curſe of God ſhall be upon their Families and Houſes---- *Prov.* 3. 33. and *Pſal.* 9. 6. and 109. 13. 15. Thus did God threaten the Houſe of *Jeroboam*, and *Ahab*, that he would not leave them one to piſs againſt the Wall, 1 *Kings* 14. 10. and 1. 15. 29. and 2. 21. 21. with 2. 9. 8. The fulfilling of which threatnings do ſtand upon Record in the forecited Books.

5. In *Progenie*, or *Succeſſive* (if I may ſo expreſs it.)

6. When God doth puniſh ſinners to utter exceſſion in this Life, and this *In terrorem*, making them ſpectacles and Examples of Divine Ven-

6. *Deſtructive.*

geance, that others may hear and fear, and do no more so wickedly; when God doth make sinners as so many *Magormissabibs* (as is said of *Pashur*, Jer. 20. 3.) terrors, not onely to themselves, but to others round about. This is threatned at large in *Deut.* 29. 21, 22, 23, 24, 25. *And the Lord shall separate thee unto evil out of all the Tribes of* Israel --- *So that the Generations to come of your Children, that shall rise up after you, and the stranger, that shall come from a far Land, shall say, when they see the Plagues of that Land, and the sicknesses, which the Lord hath laid upon it ---- Even all Nations shall say, wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this Land? What meaneth the heat of this great Anger? Then Men shall say, Because they have forsaken the Covenant of the Lord God of their Fathers* ---- For God to separate a sinner unto evil, is for God to single him out from those of the same wicked Tribe with himself, from the rest of his Companions, and to punish him for Examples sake, to Gibbet him, to hang him up in Chains, (as I may so say, in allusion to a Custom common among the Nations) to make him a מוֹפֵת, a warning to all other sinners. Thus did

Thus God is said to have punished *Abaziah*, viz. To his Destruction, 2 *Chron.* 22. 4. 7. The like is said also of *Uzziah*, 2 Chron. 26. 16. and threatned 1 *Sam.* 12. 25. *But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye, and your King.*

did God deal with his own People in the Wilderneſs, as is Recorded in the Old Teſtament, the good uſe whereof St. *Paul* doth urge at large, in 1 *Cor.* 10. from *ver.* 5. to *ver.* 13. Thus St. *Peter* tells us, that *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* were Deſtroyed with Fire and Brimſtone from Heaven, God thereby making them an Example to all thoſe that after ſhould Live ungodly, 2 *Pet.* 2. 6.

7. Laſtly, When God doth puniſh ſinners, not onely to an utter exciſion in this World, but alſo having ſo done, doth caſt them Body and Soul into Hell-fire, then he may be ſaid to puniſh them, ſeven times ſhall I ſay? Nay, rather ſeventy times ſeven, to ſpeak the Language of our Saviour in the Goſpel. There is a two-fold Deſtruction, *viz.* Temporal and Eternal; and it is not onely the former, but the latter, that is threatned to the wicked, as their deſerved puniſhment, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 9. *Who ſhall be puniſhed*, ſays St. *Paul*, ſpeaking of ſinners, who diſobey the Goſpel of Chriſt, and know not God) *with everlaſting Deſtruction from the Preſence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power*: And when this and the like threatnings are Executed, may ſinners be ſaid to be puniſhed ſeven times with a witneſs; then in a more eminent ſence will thoſe Expreſſions of God, by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, be verified, *Chap.* 5. *7. Damnatorii.*

5. 13. *Then ſhall mine Anger be accompliſhed, and I will cauſe my Fury to reſt upon them, and I will be comforted; then will God be quiet, as is the Expreſſion*, Chap. 16. 42. Then may God ſay to ſinners, Now I have done with you.

SECT. XVI.

2. HAving ſaid thus much in way of Explication, I come now to the Second thing propoſed and promiſed, *viz.* The Confirmation of the point; for which purpoſe, in the firſt place, I ſhall commend to your Reading at your leiſure, the verſes, both before and after my Text, from *ver.* 14. to the 41. As *Joſeph* ſaid to *Pharaoh*, (Gen. 41. 32. *For that the Dream was doubled unto* Pharaoh *twice, it is becauſe the thing is eſtabliſhed.*) In like ſort may it here not unfitly be ſaid, For that this threatning is in this Chapter doubled twice, yea, twice doubled (for it is four times inculcated, *ver.* 18. 21. 23. 27) it is, becauſe the thing is certain, and will undoubtedly come to paſs. As for other Scriptures, ſee *Amos* 4. 12. *Therefore thus will I do unto thee, and becauſe I will do thus unto thee, prepare to meet thy God,*

O

O Iſrael. Whatever Queſtion there be touching the meaning of the latter part of the words (what is meant by, *prepare to meet thy God, O* Iſrael, *(i.e.)* whether God doth thereby ſend a defiance to them, Challenging them to ſtand upon their Defence, and to reſiſt him, if they can; or whether he doth thereby ſeriouſly exhort them to Repentance and Submiſſion) I ſay, howſoever the ſence of thoſe words be Queſtionable, nevertheleſs the meaning of the former part of the verſe (which alone concerns the Confirmation of the point in hand, and for which purpoſe I do alledge the ſame) is moſt undoubtedly this, *viz.* That foraſmuch as God had puniſhed them by various Judgments particularly recited in the fore-going Verſes, but without any Fruit of amendment on their part; therefore doth God here threaten them with ſome more deſtructive puniſhment, than thitherto had been inflicted, ſaying, *Therefore Thus will I do unto Thee*; thus, *(i.e.)* not onely as he had fore-told and threatned, *(v.2, 3. The Lord God hath ſworn by his Holineſs, that loe the days ſhall come upon you, that he will take you away with Hooks, and* --- And not onely as he had already done (recited *v.6, 7, 9, 10, 11.*) but more than either ſo, or ſo. See alſo *Hoſ.* 5. 12, 14, 15. Having threatned to be to *Ephraim*, firſt, as a Moth, then as a Lyon, he then threatens, ſaying, I will return to my

my place, meaning, he would depart from them, and as it were, ſhut up himſelf in Heaven (the place of his ſpecial abode) till they had better bethought themſelves. See alſo *Eſay* 9. 12, 13, 14, 17, 21. and *Chap.* 10. 4. Thoſe words [*For all this, his Anger is not turned away, but his Hand is ſtretched out ſtill*] being four times repeated in like ſort, as is the Commination of my Text in this 26*th.* Chapter of *Leviticus*, do over and over, I mean, they do abundantly confirm the point in hand. And God himſelf hath from time to time Confirmed the ſame; I mean, fulfilling with his Hand (to uſe the expreſſion of *Solomon*, 1 Kings 8. 15.) what he hath ſpoken with his Mouth. As we have heard, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, ſo have we ſeen in the City of our God: In like ſort, may it be ſaid, As we have heard from the Text in hand, ſo have we ſeen the ſame verified the World throughout, God having in all Ages puniſhed particular perſons, and whole Nations with greater Judgments, who would not be Reformed by Leſſer. Thus God dealt with *Pharaoh*, Plaguing him with Plague upon Plague, and at laſt, ruining him. Thus he dealt with his *Iſrael* of Old, *Iſa.* 9. 1. He did firſt more lightly afflict the Land of *Zebulun*, and the Land of *Napthali*, but afterwards more grievouſly by the way of the Sea beyond *Jordan* in *Galilee* of the Nations; the former he did by

Tiglath

Tiglath Pileſer [Recorded 2 *Kings* 15. 29.] the latter by *Salmanaſſer* [recited 2 *Kings* 17. 18, 20.] he did it by both of them, as the Rod of his Anger, and the Staff of his Indignation, *Iſa.* 10. 5. Firſt, God did cut *Iſrael* ſhort, 2 *Kings* 20. 32. and afterwards cut them off, as is Lamented, *Lam.* 2. 3.

SECT. XVII.

Reaſons.

HAving Confirmed the point by Scriptures, I ſhall endeavour (according to the manner and Method of plain and profitable Preaching) to do it farther by the following Reaſons, *e.g.* 1. Becauſe ſinning under, or notwithſtanding God's Judgments, doth very much Aggravate our ſin, it doth put a new tincture, a double dye of guilt upon them; it makes our ſins to be crimſon and ſcarlet ſins, as is the Prophet *Eſay*'s Expreſſion, *Chap.* 1. 18. he there ſpeaking of the ſins of a Nation Aggravated by this very Circumſtance, as appears by *ver.* 5. He there ſaying, *Why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more? Ye will Revolt more and more*, Prov. 27. 22. *Though thou ſhould'ſt bray a Fool in a Mor-*

tar

tar among Wheat with a Peſtle, yet will his Fool-ſhneſs not depart from him, (*i. e.*) Though a ſinner (for this is the Fool, in the Language of the Wiſe Man) be Plagued, and Plagued again, and, as it were, pounded to pieces by the heavy Hand of God upon him, Yet (there is the Note of Aggravation) will not his wickedneſs (for this his Folly) depart from him, or he from it. There are two ſpecial things, that do much Aggravate the ſin of a Perſon or People, *viz.* Mercies more than Ordinary received by them, and Puniſhments more than Ordinary inflicted on them, but all in vain: For the former, ſee *Iſa.* 10. *Let Favour be ſhewed to the wicked, Yet will he not Learn Righteouſneſs,* Hoſ. 7. 13. *Though I have Redeemed them, Yet they have ſpoken lyes againſt me.* Hereby, or with this Circumſtance as highly Aggravated, doth God himſelf, by the Miniſtry of *Nathan*, ſet *David*'s ſins before his Face, and Charge them home upon his Conſcience, and which by the bleſſing of God proved effectual to his Repentance and Pardon, ſaying, 2 *Sam.* 12. 7, 8. *I Anoynted thee King over Iſrael, and I delivered thee out of the Hand of Saul, and I gave thee thy Maſters Houſe ——— Wherefore haſt thou deſpiſed the Commandment of the Lord?* O that great Perſons, High and Mighty Men, would conſider what an High and Mighty Aggravation of their ſin their great

great Mercies and High Promotions will be! And as for the other Aggravation of sin by Judgments in vain inflicted, see *Amos* 4.7. to v. 12. Where God having enumerated various punishments, whereby they had suffered (Famine, Fire, Plague ---) still bring in this upon the foot of the Account, *Yet, Yet, Yet* ------ (This *Yet* is five times repeated) have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord? See how King *Ahaz* is marked with a black Coal, I mean branded as an Infamous sinner, upon this score, *viz.* because he was not bettered by Affliction, 2 *Chron.* 28. 22. *This is that King* Ahaz, *q. d.* Such a Monster of Wickedness was this King *Ahaz*. See the like brand of Ignominy upon the self-same Account put upon a wicked People, *Jer.* 7. 28. *This is a Nation that Obeyeth not the voyce of the Lord their God, nor Receiveth Correction.*

Quest. How doth this appear so much to Aggravate the sin of a wicked Person or People?

I Answer (and the Answers may serve as to many distinct Reasons of the point in hand) 1. Because sinning notwithstanding Punishment for it, doth argue a Person to be a wilful sinner, or to sin wilfully. This is intimated in the Text, it being rendred, not, *if ye Are not*, but *if ye Will not be Reformed by these things, but will walk contrary unto me.* Two things do

Argue

Argue great wilfulneſs in ſinning, 1. Sinning againſt Warning and Admonition. 2 Againſt Correction. See both of them put together in that fore-cited Scripture, *Jer.* 7. 28. It may be ſaid of ſuch ſinners, that they are wicked, and they will be wicked; they are wicked, becauſe they will be wicked. Now, by how much there is more of the Will in ſinning, by ſo much the greater is the ſin.

2. Becauſe this kind of ſinning doth Argue a ſinner to be an Obſtinate and ſtubborn ſinner. Obſtinacy and ſtubborneſs is upon the Matter, or for the kind (I conceive) all one with wilfulneſs; onely I think it to be a very high degree of wilfulneſs, or wilfulneſs in the higheſt degree: And for that Cauſe I nominate it here as ſomewhat a diſtinct thing, or as a *Modus rei*, diſtinct from the former. See what doth denominate a Child an Obſtinate Child, by that in *Deut.* 21. 18. *If a Man have a ſtubborn and Rebellious Son, which will not Obey the Voyce of his Father, or the Voyce of his Mother, and that when they have Chaſtened him* (mark thoſe words) *will not hearken unto them.* Our Laws do Judge him, who having been in the Goal, Houſe of Correction, or at the Whipping-Poſt, doth yet continue his idle and wicked Courſe of Life, to be a ſtubborn Rogue. A ſinners wicked Courſe of Life is upon this very account denominated his ſtubborn way, *Judg.* 2. 19. where

19. where having related the Peoples former Sufferings for their sins, and Gods Merciful Deliverances, it is added, They ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way. Seest thou a Person un-reformed, notwithstanding he hath been thus and thus punished for his sin? In allusion to that Expression of the Prophet, *Jer.* 22. 30. (*Write ye this Man Childless*) I shall say, Note that Person, write him down, A wilful sinner, a stubborn, obstinate, and Rebellious sinner. And see what *Samuel* says of such evils, 1 *Sam.* 15. 23. *Rebellion is as the sin of Witchcraft, and stubbornes is as Iniquity and Idolatry.*

3. Because the said sinning doth Argue great obdurateness, or hardness of Heart; an Heart exceeding unapt to relent. See *Jer.* 5. 3. *O Lord*, says the Prophet, *thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive Correction: They have made their Faces harder than a Rock, they have refused to return.* How often is it said of *Pharaoh*, who was not reclaimed by Gods Plagues upon him. [*And Pharaoh's Heart was hardned?* Exod. 7. 14. 22. & 8. 19. 32. and 9. 7, 35 ---- To such a sinner it may be said, Thou art an hard-hearted *Pharaoh*.

4. Because this kind of sinning is, in a special sence, or upon a peculiar account, a walking cross, or contrary unto God. It's true

 indeed,

indeed, that all sin may well be said, for several Reasons, to be contrary to God; and consequently, a sinners persisting therein, to be a walking contrary to him, *e. g.*

1. Because it is contrary to Gods Command, Will, or Law: Sin being defined by St. *John*, *A Transgression of Gods Law*, 1 John 3. 4.

2. Against Gods Nature, he being an Holy God, and of purer Eyes than to behold evil, or to look upon Iniquity, *Hab.* 1. 13.

3. Against Gods Name, or Glory, *Rom.* 2. 23. *Through breaking the Law dishonourest thou God?* As all wicked walking may (for the foresaid Reasons) be stiled, a walking contrary to God; So pious walking is stiled, a walking with God, *Gen.* 5. 24. This kind of walking being in Conformity with Gods Nature and Law, and in a tendency to his Honour.

But as for sinning, notwithstanding punishment, this is upon a peculiar account, or upon special Reason, a walking contrary to God. *Qu.* How, or why? *Answ.* Because it doth directly oppose, or thwart Gods Primary end, or design in punishing sinners, which is, their Reformation, as you heard before commended to your notice, and which did offer it self in the very Front of the Text, and in the first place to Observation.

This may be said to cross the Providence of God, or God in his Providence as well as in his Commands.

That

That this is the direct end, and Primary ſcope of Gods puniſhments, even upon wicked men. See by that Complaint of God, in *Jer.* 2. 30. *In vain have I ſmitten your Children, they received no Correction.* Now, that is ſaid to be in vain, that is fruſtrated of its Primary and proper end: And had not the Reformation of ſinners been the direct end of Gods Puniſhing them, there could not (with Reverence to the Divine Majeſty be it ſpoken) be any place for Rational Complaints; and Reaſon would have been ſo far on the ſinners ſide, as to Object againſt the Lords Complaints, ſaying, as in *Rom.* 9. 19. *Wherefore doth he yet find fault?* Where (by the way) obſerve a miſtake too common, *viz.* Of thoſe who have thought and taught, that this is the difference betwixt the Sufferings of the godly, (which albeit for their ſins, they will have ſtiled on *Ely*, by the Name of Chaſtiſements, and not Puniſhments at all) So of the wicked, *viz.* That theſe do proceed from no ſuch thing as that, which in Scripture is called Love, or Pity in God, nor are inflicted by God for the Reforming of the wicked, but meerly for the ſatisfaction of his Juſtice, and to take due vengeance upon them. But it is apparent by

There is ſomething in God Analogical to that, which is truly Love and Pity in man, & which cannot more fitly be expreſſed, or conceived, than by ſuch words.

Scripture, that God hath gracious ends and designs in punishing the wicked, *viz.* To amend, and to save them, to save them from sin and Hell. Thence that saying of God concerning himself, *Ezek.* 24. 13. *I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged.* What? Purged, and not Purged? How can this be? Can both parts of a Contradiction be true? *Answ.* By Purged, in the former part, is meant, God his having used all fit and proper means, as well by Correction, as Counsel, whereby to have purged, (*i. e.*) Reformed them. That Eighth Canon of the fore-cited, the most Excellent *Glassius*, in his *Philologia Sacra*, concerning Verbs Active in the Sacred Language, is most memorable, it being in these words, *Verbum, quod Actionem seu effectum notat, de conatu agendi quandoque intelligendum, & per* [*Conor*] *cum propriè infinitivo Exponendum est.* A golden Rule indeed, which he Exemplifies, as all his other Canons, by several places of Scripture, both in the Old and New Testament. But to return to the Matter in hand, God hath as to this thing the like end in punishing, as in warning sinners; forasmuch as he doth Second his word with his Rod; both his word and his Rod come from God upon one Errand, thus far forth, *viz.* The amendment of sinners. A Voyce is ascribed to his Rod, as well as his word, *Mic.* 6. 9. *Hear the Rod, and who hath appointed it*: So that God

God hath somewhat to say to sinners, not onely by his word, but also by his Rod; both speak to sinners in effect, as *Ehud* did to *Eglon*, *I have a Message*, O sinner, *to thee from God*. And what is their joynt-message, or what is it that both of them have to say from God (and which the sinner therefore should listen to) but this, *Sin no more*, *lest a worse thing come unto thee* (to speak in the words of our Saviour, *John* 5.14.) Or, as the Prophet *Jeremy* delivers the Message, *Chap.* 7.3. *Amend your ways and your doings?* By the premises then it doth abundantly appear, that sinning, notwithstanding Gods punishments for it, is upon a special Account, or for a peculiar Reason, a walking contrary to God, *Quod erat demonstrandum*, this being the thing undertaken to be proved.

SECT. XVIII.

Application.

I Come now to the third thing promised, *viz. Application*; wherein I do intend more especially to enlarge my self by way of Information, Exhortation, and Direction. 1. In the way of Information or Instruction.

1. Be hence Informed, That all punishments

are from God; who ever the Sufferer, or whatever the Suffering be, the Lord the God of *Israel* is the Inflicter of it: *Amos* 3.6. *Shall there be evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it?* Amos 4.6,7. 9,10,11. *I have given you cleanneſs of Teeth --- I have with-holden the Rain --- I have ſmitten you with Blaſting --- I have ſent among you the Peſtilence --- I have overthrown ſome of you* -- As the Apoſtle ſays, there are Diverſities of Gifts, Adminiſtrations, Operations; but the ſame Spirit, Lord and God, which worketh all in all, 1 *Cor.* 12.4, 5, 6. In like ſort may it be truly ſaid, there are diverſities of Puniſhments, there are differences of Sufferings; but it is the ſame Lord and God, that inflicteth all upon all, 2 *Chron.* 7. 13. He ſhuts up Heaven, he commands the Locuſts to devour, he ſends Peſtilence --- This acknowledgment have Sufferers made, both under (*Lam.* 3. 1.) and after their ſufferings, *Pſal.* 66. 11, 12. *Dan.* 4. 35. what Creature, or Creatures of God (good Angels, or bad; man, or beaſt) are employed as Executioners of the evils that are upon us, ſtill God is the Author of them: The Creatures therefore are ſtiled in this caſe, Gods Hand and Sword, (*Pſal.* 17. 13, 14. *Deliver my Soul from the wicked, which is thy Sword, from men, which are thy Hand, O Lord* --) Gods Rod and ſtaff, *Eſay* 10. 5. *O, Aſſyrian, the Rod of mine Anger, and the*

ſtaff

ſtaff in their hand is mine Indignation.) Gods Ax and Saw (*v.* 15. *Shall the Ax boaſt it ſelf againſt him that heweth therewith, or ſhall the Saw magnifie it ſelf againſt him that ſhaketh it?*) Gods Battle-Ax and Weapons of War, *Jer.* 51.20. The Conſideration hereof ſhould make us the more patient under all Tribulations whatſoever. We have heard of the Patience of *Job*, of *David*, and of *Eli*; and we have likewiſe heard that the Conſideration thereof moved, or provoked them thereunto: *The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away*, ſaith *Job*, Chap. 1.21. *I was dumb, I opened not my Mouth, becauſe thou did'ſt it*, ſays *David*, Pſal. 39.9. *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good*, ſays *Eli*, 1 Sam. 3.18. Let us take theſe with other the like Servants of God for an Example of ſuffering Affliction: And as of the vertue of Patience it ſelf, ſo alſo of the ground, or motive thereof, *viz.* The Conſideration of the Hand of God therein.

SECT. XIX.

2. BE hence Informed, that if we ſuffer, it is for ſin, *Pſal.* 39.11. *When thou with Rebukes do'ſt Correct Man for Iniquity*, ſays

the *Psalmist*: And again, *Psal.* 38. 3,4,5. *There is no soundness in my Flesh by reason of thine Anger, neither is there any rest in my Bones because of my sin; my Wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness.* This Truth is implyed in that of *Lam.* 3. 33. *He doth not Afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of men.* They, who do, perhaps, at present not know this, shall afterwards know it, *Ezek.* 14. *last. And ye shall know, that I have not done without cause, all that I have done in it, saith the Lord God.* And what is this Cause of Gods doings in Man's sufferings, but sin? *For this Cause*, says St. *Paul* to the *Corinthians, many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep*, 1 Cor. 11. 30. The Consideration whereof should the rather stop our mouths, as to murmuring, and sinful complaining under any suffering; and should move us to Patience. *Wherefore doth a Living man complain, a man for the Punishment of his sin?* says the Church, *Lam.* 3. 39. That Question is an unanswerable Question, it must be Answered with silence (I mean) it cannot be Answered, it being thereby implyed, that no just Reason can be given for Complaints in that Case. Instead of Complaining, let us Resolve, saying, with the Church, upon Consideration of the thing in hand, *I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him*, Micah 7. 9. If we should com-

complain, God can quickly silence us, and stop our mouths with that saying, *Ezek.* 18. 25. *Hear now, O House of* Israel, *is not my way equal? Are not your ways unequal? God will be justified in his sayings, and clear when he Judgeth*, Psal. 51. 4. And the rather should we in this Case be Patient, because albeit, it is for the desert of sin, that God doth punish us, yet it is not in proportion according to its desert. Well may we acknowledge, saying, *The Lord hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our Iniquities*, Psal. 103. 10. *Job* suffered much, yet *Zophar* would have him know, that God did exact of him less than his Iniquity deserved, *Job.* 11. 6. VVhich of us, when our Afflicted condition is at the worst, but have cause to say, with *Ezra*, *Thou our God hast punished us less than our Iniquities deserve?* Chap. 9. 13. And that in Judgment he hath remembred Mercy?

SECT. XX.

3. BE hence Informed of Gods Impartiality in punishing sinners, as St. *Peter* says, *Acts* 10. 34, 35. *Of a Truth I perceive, that God is no respecter of Persons, but in every Nation*

tion be that feareth God, and worketh Righteouſneſs is accepted with him; in like ſort may we ſay, upon Conſideration of the Text in hand, we do hence perceive, that God is no Reſpecter of Perſons, but in every Nation, he that fears not God, nor worketh Righteouſneſs, ſhall be puniſhed by him. *Though hand joyn in hand, the wicked* (whoſoever they be) *ſhall not go unpuniſhed*, Prov. 11.21. *He that doth wrong, ſhall receive for the wrong, which he hath done, and there is no reſpect of Perſons*, ſays the Apoſtle, *Col.* 3.25. *I'le puniſh You*, ſays God, of his own *Iſrael*; *even You for your ſins*, ſays God, by his Prophet, *Amos* 3.2. Let every ſinner then, whatever his Quality and Condition in the world, or in the Church, be Admoniſhed to take heed of ſin, and not to preſume upon it with hope of impunity. I ſhall ſpeak to Great men, and to Good men; to great men, in the words of the *Pſalmiſt*, *Be wiſe now therefore, O ye Kings*; *be Inſtructed ye Judges of the Earth*: Serve the Lord with fear, even that God, of whom *Elihu* ſays, *He acceptеth not the Perſons of Princes, nor regardeth the Rich more than the Poor*, Job 34.19. That God, of whom the *Pſalmiſt* ſays, *He will wound the hairy Scalp of every one that goeth on ſtill in his wickedneſs*, Pſal.68.21. Mark that ſaying (the Scalp of *every* one) God will over-top the greateſt Gallant, the proudeſt Dame,

Dame, the ſtouteſt Gentleman; if he or ſhe go on ſtill in their wickedneſs, he will take a time to puniſh them.

O, let it not be ſaid of you, whom God hath advanced in wealth and power above others, as much as *Saul* was in ſtature above any of the People, made you higher by Head and Shoulders, made you by many degrees greater than the Ordinary ſort of Men and VVomen; let it not, I ſay, be truly Charged upon any of you, what St. *James* lays to the Charge of the Rich and Great Ones in his Time, ſaying, *Ye have Lived in Pleaſure on the Earth, and been wanton; ye have nouriſhed your hearts as in a day of Slaughter.* If this be the Life of any of you, Obſerve, how plainly and ſeverely that Apoſtle doth threaten ſuch as you, ſaying, *v.* 1. *Go to now, ye Rich Men, weep and howl for your Miſeries that are to come upon you. Behold, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh, The Judge ſtandeth at the door.*

As our Saviour ſaid, *Remember* Lot's *Wife*; ſo I ſay, Remember *Babylon*, whoſe doom we Read of, *Rev.* 18.7. *How much ſhe hath glorified her ſelf, and lived deliciouſly; ſo much Torment and ſorrow give her.* In ſhort, foraſmuch as the word in my Text Tranſlated [puniſh] doth primarily ſignifie to ſmite (as hath been before intimated) I will therefore preſume in the name of God (who being Judge of all the Earth,

Earth, must needs do right, in rendring to every one according to their works) to Admonish all and every of you in the words of King *Amaziah* to the Prophet, saying, *Forbear, wherefore shouldest thou be smitten, Sinner?* Yea, let every sinner imagine the God of Heaven, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, in the like words, admonishing him, and saying, Forbear thy sinful Course of Life, thy Drinking, VVhoring, Cursing, Swearing, Gameing ---- O thou rich and wealthy Person, O thou proud and wanton Dame, O thou roysting Gallant, O thou high and Mighty Man, forbear, forbear thy wicked Course of Life, wherefore shouldst Thou, even Thou be smitten? I say, Thou, even Thou: For Remember the point in hand, *viz.* That God doth punish sin without respect of Persons. This impartiality of God is signified by that expression of the Apostles, in *Rom.* 2. 2. *We are sure that the Judgment of God is κατ' ἀλήθειαν according to Truth against them which commit such things*, whereby Truth is meant Justice. The *Hebrew* word [*Amunnah*] doth signifie both Truth and Justice, and is rendred both as ἀλήθεια καὶ δικαιοσύνη and here the one is put for the other; Truth for Justice, *q. d.* It is Infallibly certain, and acknowledged by all, that God doth pass Righteous Judgment upon all, punishing sin without any manner of respect of Persons, in whomsoever

ſoever he finds it, let the ſinner be of what Nation, Quality, or Condition ſoever; whether Jew, or Gentile; high, or low; rich, or poor. Having thus ſpoken to great Men, I will now apply my ſpeech to Good Men, ſaying, in the words of the Apoſtle St. *John*, *Look to your ſelves, that ye loſe not the things, which ye have wrought*, 2 John 8. And as is ſaid to the Church of *Philadelphia*, Rev. 3. 11. *Hold that faſt, which thou haſt, that no man take thy Crown*: And in the words of St. *Paul*, to the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 10. 12. *Let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed, leſt he fall*: *For, if a Believer himſelf ſhall draw back, Gods Soul will take no pleaſure in him*, Heb. 10. 38. I will ſpeak to the beſt and greateſt of Men, in the words of *David* to *Solomon* his Son, ſaying, *Know thou the God of thy Fathers, and Serve him --- If thou ſeek him, he will be found of thee, but if thou forſake him, he will caſt thee off for ever*; even thee, who (at preſent) art never ſo good, or great. Briefly, I ſay, to all and every man, in the words of the Apoſtle, upon Conſideration of a like Matter as is now in hand, *Be not high minded, but fear. For if God ſpared not the Natural Branches* (but did ſo puniſh his *Iſrael* of Old for their ſins) *take heed, leſt he alſo ſpare not thee*, Rom. 11. 21.

SECT.

SECT. XXI.

4. BE hence Informed concerning the exceeding badneſs of Mans Natural Diſpoſition, and the incorrigibleneſs of us all by Nature, in that, puniſhment it ſelf will not, cannot of it ſelf work an alteration in us to the better. It is not without cauſe, that which *Zophar* hath ſaid, *That Man is born like a Wild Aſſes Colt*, Job 11. 12. (*i.e.*) is by Nature an untameable Creature; and as Man was thus born, ſo he continues thus to be, till he be born anew, till changed and regenerated of God. And becauſe it doth concern us to be more throughly ſenſible of it, and humble for it: Obſerve how this depravedneſs of Nature doth diſcover it ſelf in the following particulars.

1. In that Counſel and Advice, while ſinners proſper, will not work upon them, *Jer.*22 21. *I ſpake unto thee in thy Proſperity, but thou ſaidſt, I will not hear; this hath been thy manner from thy Youth up* --- Zech. 7.11. *While the Inhabitants of* Jeruſalem *were in Proſperity, and the Cities thereof round about, they pull'd away the ſhoulder, and ſtopt their Ears* ---

2. In that threatnings of puniſhment will not work upon them, 2 *Kings* 17. 13, 14. *Though God did teſtifie againſt* Iſrael *and* Judah *by his Prophets, yet they would not hearken, but hardned their Necks.*

3.

3. In that ſigns and tokens of approaching Judgments will not prevail with them. Though they ſhould be ſo wiſe, as to fore-ſee the evil, and hide themſelves, yet, like Fools, they will paſs on, till they are puniſhed, *Prov.* 22. 3. Some are ſo blind, and blinded, as to ſee nothing of this kind, which is that, that the Lord complains of, by his Prophet, *Hoſ.* 7. 9. *Gray hairs are here and there upon,* (*i. e.*) ſigns and tokens of a declining ſtate, yet he knows it not. Chriſt complains of the Jews, as in this thing, moſt unlike themſelves to what they were in other things, *Mat.* 6. 3. *O ye Hypocrites,* ſays he, *ye can diſcern the face of the Skie, but can ye not diſcern the ſigns of the Times?* Yea, the Prophet *Jeremy* Complains of ſinners in this point, as of leſs fore-ſight than the brute Creatures, ſaying, *Chap.* 8. 7. *Yea, the Stork in the Heaven knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow obſerve the time of their coming, but my People know not the Judgment of the Lord.*

4. In that Gods Judgments upon other ſinners like themſelves, will not work upon them for good. This indeed Gods Judgments on others ſhould do, and God doth Inflict them for this end among others (*i. e.*) *ut pœna ad paucos, terror ad omnes perveniat,* as ſaid the Heathen Orator, or (to ſpeak in the words of Scripture) that others may hear and fear, and do

do no more ſo wickedly. But albeit, Gods Judgments on ſome were deſigned for the Inſtruction of others, having ſuch an Inſcription upon them as our Saviours *Memento* (*Luke* 17. 32. *Remember* Lot's *Wife*) yet this will not work upon ſinners for good. Thus doth God complain of *Belſhazzar*, that took no warning by that remarkable Hand of God upon his Father (*Dan.* 5. 22. *And thou* Belſhazzar *his Son haſt not humbled thy ſelf, though thou kneweſt all this.*) The like Complaint doth God make againſt *Judah*, by the Prophet *Jeremy*, Becauſe ſhe took no warning by the Judgments of God upon her Siſter *Iſrael*, Jer. 3. 7, 8, 9, 10.

5. In that puniſhments upon ſinners in their own Perſons will not work them to a Reformation; neither a ſingle, neither many Afflictions; neither leſſer, nor greater Judgments. As for a ſingle, or leſſer ſuffering, the moſt of ſinners do ſlight and deſpiſe, as they in *Eſay* 9. 9. ſaying, *The bricks are fallen down, but we will build them with hewen ſtone; the Sycamores are cut down, but we will turn them into Cedars.* Yea, not onely leſſer, but alſo ſometimes greater Judgments are thus ſlighted, and made light of; as ſome among our ſelves have made light of *London's* Dreadful Conflagration, ſaying, Tuſh, we ſhall, within a few Years, have a more famous City than ever. This ſlighting, and not laying

laying to heart, even of great sufferings is that which the Prophet *Esay* complains of, *Chap.* 42. *last*, that albeit, *God had poured upon them the Fury of his Anger, and the strength of Battel, and it had set them on Fire round about, and burned them, yet they did not so know it, as to lay it to their heart.* Or if being under more grievous sufferings, sinners are in some measure therewith affected, yet it is not so far, as to be Reformed by them, though so far, perhaps, as to bow down their heads like a bulrush, to make some outward shew of Humiliation, to make promises of amendment, yet they come too too short of a true and thorough Reformation; these external shews and semblances being things, which the Prophets of Old have Complained of, as not accompanied, and followed with a constant amendment of Life. See *Esay* 58. 5, 6.

SECT. XXII.

5. BE hence Informed, that the great and immediate Reason, why sinners are not Reformed by Gods punishments upon them, is, because they will not be Reformed. As *Esther* said of *Haman*, (Chap. 7. 6. *The Adversary*

and Enemy is this wicked Haman:) In like sort may it be truly said, The grand Obstacle and Enemy to the Reformation of sinners, is their wicked wills: They will none of Gods Counsel, *Prov.* 1. 30. *They hate Instruction*, Prov. 5. 12. *Hate to be Reformed*, Psal. 50. 17. *My People*, says God, *would not hearken to my voyce*, Israel *would none of me*, Psal. 81. 11. It is indeed said of the wicked in Scripture, that they cannot do this, or that good, *e.g. They cannot hearken*, Jer. 6. 10. *They cannot blush*, v. 15. *They cannot leave their customary sins*, Jer. 13. 23. But the truth is, *Impii non posse* is his *non velle*, the reason of his Cannot, is his Will not: For Observe, what manner of Impotency the impotency of a sinner, as to his amendment and Reformation is. As to its species, or kind, it is not a Natural, but a Moral Impotency; I say, as to its kind (for I speak not of the Original of either) and Observe the difference betwixt these two sorts of Impotency, which are usually stiled, the one Natural, the other Moral; the former is an inability to do something, that a man cannot do, though he would never so much, having not a Natural Faculty of doing it: As of a mans inability to fly like the Fowls of the Air, or of a Lame man wanting Legs, to run or go: But the latter kind of Impotency (*i.e.*) Moral, is of doing something, which a Man hath; as he is a Rati-

Rational Creature, the Natural Faculty to will, and can do it, if he would, but is hindred both from willing and doing it by Moral vitious habits, by the Corruption of our Natures, or Natural Powers; and it is onely with respect unto this latter kind of Impotency, that it is said of wicked Men, that they cannot do this or that good, *viz.* Because they are hindred by the Obstinacy and stubbornness of their wills, who because they are stubborn and Rebellious (like that disobedient Son accused by his Parents to the Magistrate, *Deut.* 21. 18.) therefore they will not, and consequently, cannot Obey the voyce of the Lord. In this sence, or respectively to this kind of Impotency, it is said of *Joseph's* Brethren, *Gen.* 37. 4. *They hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.* Could not? Doubtless they could, if they would; but the meaning is, through their envy and hatred of him they could not; this was the τὸ κατὰνον (*i. e.*) the thing which hindred them, and with respect to that their continued Envy it is said, *They could not speak peaceably unto him*; as it is said, that through Envy, or moved with Envy, they sold him, *Acts* 7. 9, 10. So it might be truly said, that having such an Opportunity, and being so vitiously disposed, they could not but sell him; nor *trebus sic stantibus*, could it be expected that they should

have done otherwiſe. This kind of [Cannot] is a confirmed [will not] and ſo it is oft-times Interpreted in the Scripture, we reading it there in ſome places, ſaid of them, They Will not do thoſe things, which in other places it is ſaid of them, They Cannot do. See *Jer.* 6. 15. compared with *Chap.* 3. 3. In the former place it's ſaid, *They could not bluſh*; in the latter, *They refuſed to be aſhamed*, (*i.e.*) They would not bluſh. In *Jer.* 6. 10. it is ſaid, Their Ear is uncircumciſed, and they cannot hear; but in *Chap.* 11. 10. it is ſaid, they refuſed to hear: And *Zech.* 7. 11. *They ſtopped their Ears.* Our Saviour doth grant, that the unbelieving Jews could not come to him of themſelves, ſaying, *No man can come to me, except the Father draw him*, John 6. 44. Yet ſays. *John* 5. 40. *Ye will not come to me, that ye may have Life.* And indeed in Ordinary ſpeech, the words [cannot, and will not] are of promiſcuous uſe; ſo that when we ſay, we cannot do this, or that, we mean onely we will not (*i.e.*) for ſuch and ſuch Reaſons we will not. In this Reſpect it is uſed by him, who being importuned unſeaſonably to riſe out of his Bed, makes Anſwer, ſaying, *I cannot*

In this ſence doth *Ruth's* next Kinſman ſay, of the parcel of Land that was *Elimelech's* [I cannot Redeem it, *Chap.* 4. 6.] meaning thereby, He Would not; for if he would he could, (*i.e.*) if he would have born the inconvenience of Redeeming it there mentioned, of which being at firſt not ſenſible, ſays he, v. 4. *I will Redeem it.*

cannot Riſe, Luke 11.7. meaning, that becauſe of the trouble of Riſing at that time of Night, and his Children being in Bed with him, he would not Riſe; and thus his cannot is interpreted, *viz.* by a will not, *v.* 8. *I ſay unto you, though he will not riſe* ---- Thus is the word [Cannot] uſed by him, who being invited to a great Supper, made this Excuſe, ſaying, *I have Marryed a Wife, and I cannot come.* Certainly he could have come, if he would, for his Wife did not by force hinder him, did not cauſe him to be bound hand and foot, or Chain him at home (this indeed would have Excuſed his not coming) but the meaning is, that becauſe he choſe, and was reſolved to Entertain himſelf at home with his Wife newly Marryed, as a more deſirable thing than a meals meat, therefore he would not come. And thus in effect is that his [cannot] interpreted, *viz.* by his ſlighting, or making light of the invitation, *Mat.* 22.5. *But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his Farm, another to his Merchandiſe.* Briefly, That the main and immediate Reaſon, why ſinners are not Reformed by ſuch Divine Methods as are uſed for that end (their [cannot] being in true conſtruction) a [will not] appears in this, *viz.* In that when they ſin, they ſin freely and voluntarily, ſo freely, as that they are ſaid to chooſe their way, they way of their abomination, *Eſay* 66.3. *To*

commit Iniquity with greedineſs, Eph.4.18. *To do evil with both hands earneſtly*, Mic. 7.3. *To drink it like water*, Job. 15.16. Yea, like Wine, or to feed upon it, as an hungry Perſon doth upon Bread; *Prov.*4.17. *They eat the Bread of wickedneſs, and drink the Wine of Violence.* The Premiſes conſidered, let no un-reformed ſinner under any pretence whatſoever, go about to excuſe his ſinful courſe, or himſelf in it. Say not, I would have betaken my ſelf to a new courſe of Life, but the perſwaſion of this and that Companion hindred me; I was willing of my ſelf, but this and that fell in the way, and put me off -- Leave all Excuſes, ſet the Saddle upon the right Horſe, lay the blame where it mainly ought to be laid, *viz.* upon your own wilfulneſs, the Obſtinacy of your wills, confeſs, ſaying, with him, in *Prov.* 5.11. when his Stock and Eſtate, his Fleſh and his Body were conſumed by his wicked courſe of Life, *How have I hated Inſtruction, and my Heart deſpiſed Reproof? And have not Obeyed the voice of my Teachers, nor enclined mine Ear to them that Inſtructed me?* Be it known to thee, O un-reformed ſinner, whoever thou art, that the grand Reaſon, why thou waſt not Reformed by theſe things, (*i. e.*) by the Judgments of God upon thee, is, not becauſe thou couldſt not

Yea, it is plainly ſaid, *Mat.* 22. 3. They would not come.

not [as a cannot in the moſt proper ſence is oppoſed to a will not] but becauſe thou wouldſt not be Reformed; thy cannot, and thy will not being in this caſe the ſelf-ſame thing; or I will chooſe to expreſs the Truth in hand in the very words of Scripture, ſaying, The Reaſon why thou doſt continue unreformed, is, becauſe thou refuſeſt to Reform. See *Jer.* 5. 3. *Thou haſt ſtricken them, but they have not grieved; thou haſt conſumed them, but they refuſed to receive Correction: They have made their Faces harder than a Rock, they have refuſed to Return.* Obſerve the word repeated (*They Refuſed, They Refuſed.*)

SECT. XXIII.

6. BE hence Informed, that Motives, or Arguments to Reformation, taken from the conſideration of the deſerved puniſhment of ſin, whether threatned, or inflicted, are very warrantable, and fit to be uſed; it being not onely Lawful, but the Duty of ſinners to improve them to the ſaid end and purpoſe: and be Informed moreover, that the Reformation of ſinners, that is wrought by theſe things (*i. e.*) By the puniſhments of God upon them, may

notwithſtanding, be a true, ſound, and ſincere Reformation. I grant indeed, that all, who while they were under the ſore hand of God, did make Vows, and deep Proteſtations of amendment, confeſſing their ſins, and profeſſing ſorrow for them, and who in ſhew were much Reformed, yet in Truth were not. God complains of his People, that when he ſlew them, then they ſought him, but their heart was not right with him --- *Pſal.* 78. 34, 35. and that though in a ſort they turned to him, yet it was not with their whole Heart, but feignedly, *Jer.* 3. 16. Thence that complaint of God, by the mouth of *Hoſea*, Chap. 6. 4. *O* Ephraim, *what ſhall I do unto thee? O* Judah, *what ſhall I do unto thee? For your goodneſs is as a Morning Cloud, and as the early dew, it goeth away.* But others, through the bleſſing of God, co-operating with his hand, have been otherwiſe wrought upon, even to a thorough and laſting Reformation. Thus was *David* wrought upon, *Pſal.* 119.67. *Before I was afflicted I went aſtray, but now have I kept thy word.* And *Manaſſes*, of whom the Chronicle ſays, *That when he was in Affliction, he beſought the Lord his God, and humbled himſelf greatly before the Lord God of his Fathers*, 2 Chron. 33. 12. And it is not to be doubted, but there be many thouſands in in Heaven, not only of great Men (ſuch as *David* and *Manaſſes* were) but Men and Women

men of all sorts and Conditions, who, like the Prodigal, were brought home to their Heavenly Father by weeping-cross. Nor let any one think it an unworthy, a selfish, and a slavish temper, to be perswaded, or disswaded upon the said Account; nor let any one say, that these are carnal Motives, the onely Principles of sound Reformation being Spiritual Principles: the Love of God, the Glory of God, the Loveliness of Christ and Christianity --- Some indeed have been so vain in their Imagination, as to Dogmatize at this rate; and some have been so Fooliſh, as to deem such the onely sound and Spiritual Preachers. But that the Folly of such may be made known to all men, whereby they may proceed no farther, be it considered, That God onely wise doth urge sinners to Reformation by Arguments of this nature; and is it a thing unworthy of us, or beneath us; a thing more fit for a Slave, than a Son or Servant of God to suffer himself to be thereby induced? Again, shall we call Divine Motives, carnal Motives? As the Lord said to St. *Peter*, *That which I have cleansed call not thou Common*: So

Some do call Preaching of Judgment Legal, and not Gospel-Preaching; whereas St. *Paul* says, that in the Gospel is Revealed, as the Righteousness of God; so also the wrath of God against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness, whereupon the Gospel doth become the mighty power of God to the Salvation of sinners, *Rom.* 1.16,17, 18.

I say, to the deluders and deluded in this matter, Those Motives and Arguments, which because God himself hath suggested, we may well say are Divine, call not you Carnal.

Again, Is the Love of God and the Love of our selves things impossible, inconsistent? what doth God mean by all his promises and threatnings in Scripture, if sinners should not have respect unto themselves, to whom and whose welfare those very promises have a respect? What means those complaints of God in Scripture, against sinners for destroying themselves, and his Expostulations with them, *Why will ye dye?* And that Complaint of our Saviour (who is denominated such, because he saves sinners from wrath to come) *Ye will not come unto me, that ye may have Life?* John 5. 40. How irrational are the said Complaints, if self-love, and self-seeking in this way, (*i.e.*) in the way of Reformation were such a thing as too too many Innovators (I do not mean in Ceremonies, but in certain Doctrinals and Substantials) have made them?

Again, as to the pretence of Spiritual Principles, consider, Is not the Fruit of the Spirit in all goodness? *Ephes.* 5. 9. And is not the fear of God, even as a consuming fire, one part of goodness? Else why doth St. *Paul* speak and exhort at that rate as he doth, saying, *Heb.* 12. 28, 29. *We receiving a Kingdom that cannot be shaken,*

shaken, let us have Grace: What Grace? Even this Grace of Fear, even this conducing to the acceptance of our Service with God, for our God is a Consuming fire, And is not this fear of the Lord a Fruit of Gods Spirit, as well as Love and Joy in God?

And as for the Glory of God, doth it not mainly consist in the Salvation of sinners? And how can a sinner more glorifie God, than by seeking to save himself, or by accepting Salvation through Christ when, and as it is offered? Such is the inseparable connexion betwixt the Glory of God and a sinners Salvation, that, although it's true, that his Glory doth oft-times come in competition with Mans temporal safety, yet it never doth, nor can come into competition with his everlasting Salvation; so much are those to be blamed, who have put poor Souls to try the soundness of their Conversion by this mark, *viz.* the seeking of Gods Glory before their own Salvation, or before the seeking of themselves in the Salvation of their own Souls. Is there not some cause to say to such a Preacher, as *Ahab* did to *Elijah*, but altogether without cause, *Art Thou he that troubleth Israel?* Is not this to add Affliction to the Afflicted? Is not this to make the heart of the Righteous sad, whom God hath not made sad? Are not such Preachers like *Jobs* Friends, *Miserable Comforters*? I will not say

of

of such, that their Doctrine is of a tendency to unman Man, or make him no Man; and much less will I say, it is of a tendency to ungod God, or to make him no God: Yet this I would not doubt to say (and were it not for enlarging this use over-much, I would endeavour to demonstrate) *viz.* That it is of tendency to make Man another manner of Creature, than by his Creator he was made, and to make God another manner of God, than in his word he hath described himself to be.

The Premises considered, let the Ministers of Christ take heed of binding heavy burdens, and laying Yoaks upon the Necks of humbled Souls, which they are not able to bear; of begetting, and and nourishing causless Jealousies in the minds of such as are truly desirous to fear the Name of God, as if to be provoked to Duty by the consideration of Punishment, were a certain sign of a Mercenary, Carnal, Slavish, and a less Spiritual Temper: For consider, doth the onely wise God use such Arguments, wherby to curb the Saints from sin, onely upon this Account, because of their Carnality, (*i. e.*) because they are Flesh as well as Spirit; and therefore directing them onely as to that fleshly part which is in them? I trow, no; for did not God use an Argument of this Nature, thereby to restrain *Adam*, even while he was in Innocency, from the breach of his Command-

ment,

ment, not to Reform him, but to preſerve him Innocent, ſaying, *In the Day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt dye the Death*, Gen. 2. 17. Let us, the Miniſters of God, then take heed of being Righteous over-much as to the thing here ſpoken of, leſt by dogmatizing therein, as ſome others have done, we offend againſt God, and againſt the Generation of his Children, as is the *Pſalmiſts* expreſſion, *Pſal.* 73. 15. To over-do is to undo.

2. Let no true Convert, Man, or Woman; let no ſinner truly Reformed, call into Queſtion the Truth of their Converſion, or Reformation meerly upon this Account, becauſe they were brought home to God by weeping-Croſs, becauſe it was by theſe things, (*i. e.*) By Divine Puniſhments, that their Reformation was wrought, or brought about; but notwithſtanding this, let them go on chearfully in a Chriſtian Courſe, nothing doubting, but Rejoycing in the Lord always, and with hearts continually lifted up in the ways of the Lord, which was the Commendation of King *Jehoſhaphat*, 2 Chron. 17. 6. As God did in Time paſt ſpeak to our Fathers, by the Prophets, πολυμερῶς & πολυτρόπως, at ſundry times, not all his mind at once, and in divers manners, ſo in all Ages, paſt and preſent, it hath pleaſed him to Convert ſinners at divers times (ſome ſooner, and ſome later) in divers manners, and by

by divers means; some without Affliction by his Word, and some not but by Affliction: And as the Apostle said in another Case (*Phil.* 1. 18. *What then? Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is Preached, and I therein do rejoyce, yea, and I will rejoyce.*) In like sort it doth well become us to say in this case. What then? notwithstanding every way, whether without these things, or by these things, by Punishment, or without Punishment sinners are Reformed and won to Christ, and I therein therefore do rejoyce, yea, and I will rejoyce; yea, and let the Convert himself therein rejoyce; yea, let the Angels in Heaven therein rejoyce, even as they do rejoyce: *For*, says our Saviour, *Luke* 15. 10. *There is Joy in the Presence of the Angels of God over one sinner that Repenteth*, implying, let the means inducing him truly to Repent, be what it will, though it were by means of sore Affliction (as it was in the Case of the Prodigal, the Parable of whom is Related in the Verses immediately following) *Yet there is Joy in the Presence of the Angels of God over one such sinner*, one such Prodigal, *that Repenteth* by such means.

Caution. Let none, especially of my Brethren in the Ministry, accuse me as a Legal Preacher upon Account of what I have said in this Use, or Section, whereby to Vindicate

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the Truth, and to Convert some among them, if it may be, from the error of their way; nor let them say, That it is the sence of the Love of God in Christ, inflaming the heart of a poor sinner, which is the Principle of sound and sincere Reformation; of which Love, whether of God to sinners, or of sinners their Love to God, I have been hitherto so silent; for as there was no Occasion hitherto inducing me to speak of either of them (without wandring from my Text, a fault not so easily excusable) so I shall think it sufficient in this place, to speak onely a few words as to that matter, saying, That my Judgment, or Opinion is, That no sinner is, or ever was Reformed by these things, (*i. e.*) By the Punishments of God, whether the fear of them, as threatned, or the feeling of them, as inflicted, or both; but he is, or was induced thereunto by the apprehension and belief of the Love and Mercy of God held forth in the Conditional Promises of Life and Salvation upon Record in the Gospel (I speak of them, who Live under the Gospel) unto all and all manner of sinners; upon which apprehension and belief he cannot but be wrought upon unto some measure of Love to God and Jesus Christ (the Seeds of Divine Love being at that time sown in his heart) although this his Love is not, especially at his first Conversion, so much, if at all perceived, whether by others,

or

or by himself, his fear and dread of God and Divine wrath by Reason of what is either inflicted, or threatned, being much more visible and apparent. So that in speaking concerning the fear of God, and dread of his Judgments, let me not be understood, or rather let me say mis-understood, to have spoken any thing to the obscuring, depressing, or disparaging of the Divine Grace of Love, whether of Gods Love to Man, or of Mans Love to God; upon either of which I should as readily have enlarged my self, had Occasion invited me, as upon the Theme in hand; and forasmuch as there will be a fit Occasion before I have finished this my Text, to speak of the infinite Love of God in his readiness to receive into Grace and Favour even those sinners, that are not otherwise Reformed, than by these things, (*i.e.*) than by Punishments; the Readers shall perceive, that as it offers it self, I shall take the Occasion by the fore-top, as the saying is; I mean, I will not neglect to make use of it; mean while I will conclude this Use, saying, Forasmuch as it is the Duty of Gods Ministers to perswade sinners, as by the Love, so also by the Terror of the Lord (as was St. *Paul*'s manner, a wise Master-builder, 2 *Cor.* 5. 11.) Let sinners suffer themselves by the Terror of the Lord to be perswaded, and if by such perswasions they have been wrought upon to a Reformation of

their

their wicked ways; let not such Converts trouble themselves, nor let any others perplex them with causeless doubts concerning the soundness of their Conversion, meerly upon the Account of their having been perswaded by that means, or Arguments of that Nature.

SECT. XXIV.

2. I Come now (among the several sorts of Uses promised to be insisted on) to the Second, *viz.* Exhortation, which I intend two-fold,

1. With respect to Time past and present.
2. With Repect to the Future.

1. Respectively to the former, be we all exhorted to examine our selves and the present case, Have we been, or are we Reformed By These things? What are our ways and walks? Are they such as please God, or are they contrary unto him? I might from the Text and Doctrine in hand take Occasion to make a two-fold Exhortation.

1. With Respect to Personal sufferings, exhorting sinners to examine themselves, whether, and how they have been bettered by the Afflictions wherewith God hath visited their Persons, and their Families, how several ways the just God hath plagued them by sore Sicknesses, sad disasters, undoing losses, Disobe-

dient Children, and many other ways; and how they have been any whit bettered by such things, whether they can in any good sort say, with *David*, *Before I was so and so Afflicted, I went astray, but now have I kept thy word.* But in this Exhortation I will not so much enlarge my self as upon the next following.

2. With Respect to more general Punishments, examine the Matter, are we Reformed by the sore hand of God, that hath so many ways been upon us, and is still stretched forth against us? What Reformation hath Plague and Pestilence, Fire and Sword, a Succession of Wars by Sea and Land, with our selves and Forreign Enemies wrought upon us: Examine the Matter as to three-fold Reformation; Publique, Domestick, and Personal.

1. As to publique; Are we a Nation, that doth Righteousness indeed, and seek the Ordinances of God, to speak in the Language of the Prophet? *Esay* 58. 2. Are we a Nation, that do Obey the Voyce of the Lord, and that have received Correction, to speak in the Language of the Prophet *Jeremy*? Ch. 7. 28. Reformation is the thing that hath been much and long talked of, Year after Year, in our Church and Nation; the word [Reformation] hath been much in the mouths of every one; but as for the thing it self [Reformation] where is it? or how doth it appear? True, as by the Reforma-

mation of the Doctrine of the Church of *England* from Popery, we are Justly called, as other Protestant Churches, a Reformed Church, and verily ever since I was more fully acquainted with the History and Body of Socinianism (*Socinus* and his followers being of all others the great pretenders to Reformation, being extremely dis-satisfied both with that of the Protestant Churches, stiled *Lutheran* and *Calvenists* also) I have dreaded one extreme or other, and what a Reformation of our Doctrinals by a new Confession of Faith would come to; and lest we might not thereby some way, or in some things be more deformed by the inserting of private Opinions instead of Doctrines of Faith. It is not then a Doctrinal Reformation, but a Practical, which is the Matter of the present Inquest: Are our Lives Reformed according to our Doctrine? What Agreement is there betwixt the Lives of us Protestants and our Protestant Doctrine? Do we not by the former confute the latter? I mean, as much as our Lives can do it. O, what a shame is our Conversation to our Profession? Examine, have we not sinned seven times more, since we have been punished seven times more? Since the Lord hath so severely smitten us, have we not Revolted more and more? To speak in the Language of the Prophet, *Esay* 1. 5. Instead of being Reformed, are we not more and more

deformed by running from one extreme to another? How may it be ſaid of, and to us, as of Gods *Iſrael* of Old, *Jer.* 2. 23. *Thou art a ſwift Dromedary traverſing her ways?* How do we traverſe our way from one extreme to another; ſome on the right hand, and ſome on the left? Some are all for Preaching, and ſome are all for Praying; ſome are onely for Prayers upon a Book, and ſome for no Prayers but ſuch as are without Book; ſome are for no manner of Prayer, ſo much as in a Private Family, but our Liturgy, or Book of Common-Prayer; and ſome are for any manner of Prayer whatſoever, ſave Prayer by that Book; ſome are Anti-Ceremonial altogether, ſome are ſupra-Ceremonial, ſome are Soli-Ceremonial? And how do we by extremes Plague and grinde one another, like the upper and neather Milſtones? Briefly, what by Sects and Schiſmatical Separations (not to ſpeak of damnable Hereſies, and defections to Popery) what by the increaſe of Prophaneneſs of all ſorts in all ſorts, inſtead of being Reformed by theſe things (the Judgments upon us) O how transformed to the worſt, O how deformed are we! As *Samuel* ſaid to *Saul* (1 *Sam.* 15. 14. *If thou haſt performed*

Some are all for God, and ſome for *Cæſar*; ſome are altogether for the Ordinances of God, as is pretended, and ſome for the Ordinances of Man.

formed the Commandment of the Lord, what meaneth then this bleating of the Sheep in mine Ears, and the lowing of the Oxen which I hear?) In like sort may it be said, If we are Reformed by these things (Plague, and Fire, and Sword --) what means that Swearing, Cursing, Drinking, Whoring; that Pride and Luxury, that Fraud and Injustice, that horrible neglect and Prophanation of our Christian Sabbath, those our manifold Transgressions, and our mighty sins (to speak in the words of the Prophet *Amos*, Chap. 5. 12.) that do abound, and seem more and more like a deluge to increase? A little search may suffice to satisfie the enquiry, Whether we are, or are not Reformed by these things: Yea, without search the thing Discovers it self in the Lives of all sorts of Clergy (which it may well become a Minister of God, in the first place, sadly to mind and mention) Laity, high and low, in City and Countrey, Gentry and Commonalty. As God said, by the Prophet *Jeremy*, Chap. 2. 34. (*In thy Skirts is found the blood of the Souls of the poor Innocents; I have not found it upon secret search, but upon all these.*) In like sort may it be said, concerning the sins of our Nation, They may be found without secret search, in our skirts are they found; they are written in our Fore-heads, they testifie to our Faces, they are visible as the Light at Noon-day: O how

many do declare their sin, as *Sodom*, and hide it not! *Esay* 3. 9.

2. What Family-Reformation is there? How few *Jacobs* are there, who have endeavoured to cleanse their Houses of that wickedness, that from Father to Son hath still kept the Possession! *Gen.* 35. *begin.* How doth the Leprosie of sin stick as close to Mens Dwellings, especially the Palaces and Mansions of great Persons, as ever before! Yea, how many Families are much worse than before! Time was, when it might have been said of such and such Families, There had wont to be daily Praying in this House, Reading the Scriptures, Repeating Sermons, Singing Psalms, Catechising Children and Servants --- But what's become now of all this? Some are become Sectaries, some Prophane, some meer Worldlings, some Papists, some Atheists --- Briefly, as the Prophet said of *Israel*, Hos. 8. 3. So it may be sadly said of too too many Families, They have cast off the thing that is good.

3. Examine, what Personal Reformation is there: Let every Man lay the hand upon his own Breast, and smite upon his Thigh, saying, Have I been Reformed by these Things? A needful Exhortation; for we all have too much of the Hypocrite in us: I mean, we are quick-sighted to espie faults, though lesser, in others, but to take no notice, even of greater, in our selves,

ſelves. We can vociferate, cry aloud againſt the ſins of others (Court, City, Magiſtrates --) make declamations (*O Tempora! O Mores!*) But who is it, or how few are there, who do conſider themſelves? Well may I ſay, with that Heathen Poet, *Ut nemo in ſeſe tentat deſcendere, nemo?* Or rather I will ſay, with the Prophet, *Jer.* 8. 6. *There is none that Repenteth him of his ſin, ſaying, What have I done?* Many complain of the doings of others; they can tell what others have done, though it was done long ſince; but few do in penitent ſort ſay, *What have I done?* They are apt enough to tell of the good they have done, and to pride themſelves in it, as did the *Phariſee*, ſaying, *God, I thank thee, I am not as other Men are* -- Yea, they are apt to ſpeak of the good they have not done, as *Saul* did. But few do conſider, ſaying to themſelves, What, what have I done? What good have I left undone? Let us be Exhorted then in the midſt of thoſe declamations, which may every where be heard againſt the ſinfulneſs of the Times, to ſay to our ſelves, as the Prophet *Obed* did to the People of *Iſrael* (2 *Chron.* 28. 10. *Are there not with You, even with You, ſins againſt the Lord your God?*) Thus let every one ſay, Are there not ſins with Me, even with Me, againſt the Lord our God? Or, as *Nathan* ſaid to *David* (*Tu es homo;*) So let every one ſay to

himſelf, Am not I the Perſon, who am not Reformed by Theſe Things?

SECT. XXV.

2. MY Second Exhortation ſhall be with Reſpect to the Future. As the Servants of *Nabal* ſaid to their Miſtreſs (*1 Sam.* 25. 17. *Now therefore know and conſider, what thou wilt do; for evil is determined againſt our Maſter, and againſt all his Houſhold.*) In like ſort I ſhall endeavour to awaken every Perſon, from the higheſt to the loweſt, ſaying, Now therefore know and conſider, what we have to do, and will do; for evil, yea, more evil than hitherto we have Suffered, is threatned againſt us in the words of my Text; yea, I may ſay, is determined by God againſt us (*i. e.*) is by God himſelf determined Conditionally, or without Reformation to fall upon us. A little conſideration will ſuffice to know what we ſhould do in this Caſe, even the conſideration of this one Text in hand, (*If ye will not be Reformed by theſe things.*) Reformation is the work to be done by us, and that therefore is it which I ſhall exhort you unto, and I will do it in the words of Scripture: Firſt, in the words of our Saviour,

Saviour, *John* 5. 14. *Let us ſin no more, leſt a worſe thing come to us*: In the words of *Daniel*, to King *Nebuchadnezzar*, Chap. 4. 27. *Break off your ſins by Righteouſneſs.* In the words of the Prophet *Eſay*, *Chap.* 1. 16. *Waſh ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before the Eyes of God; ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well* --- Ceaſe from every courſe of contrary walking, and inſtead of walking contrary to God, betake your ſelves to a contrary walk; ſtudy to walk with God, walk before God, worthy of God, unto all well-pleaſing. In a word; Mind, Intend, Reſolve, Labour a Reformation. Know and Conſider the following particulars, which I am to ſuggeſt and make known to you, as things which we ſhould have done, and then conſider what we have to do.

1. Know, and Conſider, That our Primary Duty was, to have been Reformed before, and without theſe Things (*i. e.*) without Puniſhments, and before the Judgments of God were poured forth upon us. We ſhould have walked with God in Proſperity, we ſhould have hearkned to his ſtill ſmall Voyce, Inſtructing us by the Mouth of his Miniſters, they wooing and entreating us as Ambaſſadors in Chriſts ſtead, ſaying, We beſeech you, be ye Reconciled to God. O how ſhould theſe wooings, theſe beſeechings --- have mollified and melted us!

himſelf, Am not I the Perſon, who am not Reformed by Theſe Things?

SECT. XXV.

2. MY Second Exhortation ſhall be with Reſpect to the Future. As the Servants of *Nabal* ſaid to their Miſtreſs (*1 Sam. 25. 17. Now therefore know and conſider, what thou wilt do; for evil is determined againſt our Maſter, and againſt all his Houſhold.*) In like ſort I ſhall endeavour to awaken every Perſon, from the higheſt to the loweſt, ſaying, Now therefore know and conſider, what we have to do, and will do; for evil, yea, more evil than hitherto we have Suffered, is threatned againſt us in the words of my Text; yea, I may ſay, is determined by God againſt us (*i. e.*) is by God himſelf determined Conditionally, or without Reformation to fall upon us. A little conſideration will ſuffice to know what we ſhould do in this Caſe, even the conſideration of this one Text in hand, (*If ye will not be Reformed by theſe things.*) Reformation is the work to be done by us, and that therefore is it which I ſhall exhort you unto, and I will do it in the words of Scripture: Firſt, in the words of our Saviour,

Saviour, *John* 5. 14. *Let us ſin no more, leſt a worſe thing come to us*: In the words of *Daniel*, to King *Nebuchadnezzar*, Chap. 4. 27. *Break off your ſins by Righteouſneſs.* In the words of the Prophet *Eſay*, *Chap.* 1. 16. *Waſh ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before the Eyes of God; ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well* --- Ceaſe from every courſe of contrary walking, and inſtead of walking contrary to God, betake your ſelves to a contrary walk; ſtudy to walk with God, walk before God, worthy of God, unto all well-pleaſing. In a word; Mind, Intend, Reſolve, Labour a Reformation. Know and Conſider the following particulars, which I am to ſuggeſt and make known to you, as things which we ſhould have done, and then conſider what we have to do.

1. Know, and Conſider, That our Primary Duty was, to have been Reformed before, and without theſe Things (*i. e.*) without Puniſhments, and before the Judgments of God were poured forth upon us. We ſhould have walked with God in Proſperity, we ſhould have hearkned to his ſtill ſmall Voyce, Inſtructing us by the Mouth of his Miniſters, they wooing and entreating us as Ambaſſadors in Chriſts ſtead, ſaying, We beſeech you, be ye Reconciled to God. O how ſhould theſe wooings, theſe beſeechings --- have mollified and melted us!

us! O how ſhould ſinners be affected to hear the intreaties and obſecrations of Chriſt, ſaying, as *Saul*, upon the hearing of *David*'s crying out unto him, 1 *Sam.* 24. 16. *Is this thy Voyce, my Son* David? Is this thy Voyce, my ſweet Saviour? Is it the Saviour indeed that doth beſeech the ſinner to be Reconciled? what leſs ſhould a ſinner do at the hearing of this, than *Saul* did upon the ſore-cited Occaſion, of whom it is ſaid, *And* Saul *lifted up his Voyce, and wept.* Thus, I ſay, we ſhould have Reformed without, and before theſe things, even upon the hearing of Gods Word. See *Zech.* 7. 7. *Should ye not hear the words, which the Lord hath cryed by the former Prophets, when* Jeruſalem *was Inhabited, and in Proſperity, and the Cities thereof round about her?* Mark thoſe words [In Proſperity] In alluſion to thoſe words of the Prophet, may it not be fitly ſaid to us, ſhould we have heard the words of the Lord, by the Mouth of his Miniſters, while our Houſes were ſtanding, our Trading was quick, our Arms and Armies were more dreaded, our *Jeruſalem* flouriſhed, our Church un-divided, our Nation at Unity within it ſelf, when we went together to the Houſe of God as Friends?

2. We ſhould have Reformed by other things, (*i. e.*) By Puniſhments threatned, as *Nineveh* did. This is that which God exhorts unto

unto by the Prophet *Zephaniah*, Chap. 2. *beg. Gather your ſelves together; yea, gather your ſelves together, O Nation not deſired. Before the decree bring forth, Before the day paſs as the Chaff, Before the fierce Anger of the Lord come upon you, before the Anger of the Lord come upon you.* Obſerve the word [*Before*] four times repeated. I have at large in the handling of the firſt point of Doctrine, ſpoken of this Matter, *viz.* Of the timely heeding of Gods warnings by his Threatnings before they be Executed, and therefore I need ſay leſs here as to that Matter.

Having not been Reformed by Gods ſtill, ſmall Voyce, Counſelling and beſeeching us, we ſhould have reformed by his voice Thundring, & Lightning in his Threatnings.

3. We ſhould have Reformed by the ſight and hearing of Gods Judgments Executed on others. This God expects, ſaying, *Zeph.* 3. 6, 7. *I have cut off the Nations, their Towns are Deſolate, I have made their ſtreets waſte, that none paſſeth by --- I ſaid, ſurely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive Inſtruction.* This indeed is according to the Mind of God, who in puniſhing of ſinners, deſigns, not onely the Reformation of them who ſuffer, but of others alſo, who poſſibly may behold, or hear of the ſame, as hath been upon Occaſion before ſaid and proved. Thence it is ſaid of *Corah, Dathan,* and

and *Abiram*, that by the notorious way of their periſhing, They became a ſign, *Numb.* 26.10. (*i.e.*) a Monument, a Spectacle, or an Example of Divine Vengeance to warn others.

4. We ſhould have been Reformed by leſſer, by fewer puniſhments, before it came to ſeven times more for our ſins. Therefore doth God ſend leſſer Judgments, that theſe being well improved, greater Judgments may be prevented. Thus and thus we ſhould have done, but becauſe it is too late, and to leſs purpoſe, to conſider onely what we ſhould, but have not done; therefore,

2. Secondly, and more eſpecially let us know and conſider what we have to do for the future, *viz.* If we have not been Reformed by other things (by Advice and Counſel, by Threatnings, by the ſight of Divine Vengeance Executed upon others, by leſſer Judgments inflicted upon our ſelves heretofore) at leaſt, at laſt, let me ſay, *Let us be Reformed by theſe Things*, (*i.e.*) the ſeven times more, that hath been added to our former Sufferings. It is ſaid in *Exod.* 4. 8. concerning the *Egyptians*, *That if they did not hearken to the Voyce of the firſt ſign, they would hearken to the Second.* Theſe ſigns were Plagues, or ſo many ſeveral ſtrokes of Divine Vengeance: And Gods Rods have a Voyce (*Mic.*6.9. *Hear the Rod.*) Now, forasmuch as we have not hearkned to the voyce

of

of one Judgment, of former, of leſſer Judgments, let us not harden our hearts more than the *Egyptians*, but let us hearken to the voyce of latter ſigns, of our farther, preſent puniſhments.

Know and Conſider theſe two things, *viz.* That nothing leſs than Reformation will ſerve, either our turn, or Gods turn (as I may ſo ſay) I mean, that will pleaſe God, or profit us. *e.g.* It is not the external formal Obſervation of a ſolemn Faſt; yea, many ſuch Faſting days: It is not many Prayers, ſhort or long Prayers; it is not the putting on of Mournful Apparel, the ſpreading Sackcloath and Aſhes under us; it is not meer Vows and Promiſes of Reformation, that will pleaſe God (he will not be put off in that ſort, with ſuch Pageantry and mockers) or that will ſecure us from ſeven times more for our ſins. See at large by what we may read at leiſure, in *Hoſ.* 7. 14. *Eſay* 1. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. and 58. 5, 6. How little God doth regard all that come ſhort of waſhing and cleanſing (*Eſay* 1. 16.) ſhort of a Reformation, and in what little, or no ſtead ſuch things will ſtand a ſinful Nation. I ſhall then conclude this Exhortation with the words of God by the Prophet *Jeremy*, Chap. 6. 8. *Be thou Inſtructed, O* Jeruſalem, *leſt my Soul depart from thee*; and the rather with theſe words, becauſe the word in my Text, which is Tranſlated [Reformed] doth ſignifie [Inſtructed] in Con-

for-

formity to both which rendrings of the word, let me say, yea, let us imagine God himself saying to us, Be thou Instructed, be thou Reformed, O Kingdom of *England*, lest my Soul depart from thee.

SECT. XXVI.

3. THE third Use promised to be insisted upon, shall be a Use of Direction, and this three-fold.

1. Touching the manner of this Reformation, what manner of Reformation it should be.

2. The means Conducing.

3. The Motives Inducing thereunto.

For the first, be it known, that our Reformation should be a well Conditioned Reformation, having all its proper and fit Ingredients and Adjuncts. *e.g.*

1. It must be a Real and Substantial Reformation, not Counterfeit and Hypocritical, such as God Complains of, saying, *Jer.* 3. 10. *Yet her Treacherous Sister* Judah *hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly.* Under this head of Reality, I shall specifie two or three things as intimately pertaining to it. *e.g.*

1. Our

1. Our Reformation ſhould be not barely a promiſed Reformation, a Reformation in word and Tongue (to ſpeak in the Language of St. *John*, 1. 3. 18.) but in Deed, and in Truth. The renewing of our Promiſes and Covenant with God is one Duty pertaining to the Holy Obſervation of a Solemn Faſt, for which we have a Pattern of Gods Church of Old, *Neh.* 9. 1. *with laſt.* But what are Promiſes without Performances? To promiſe, and not perform, is but *Verba dare*, to ſeek to couzen, and to mock God, and wherein indeed we do but deceive our ſelves; *For God is not mocked*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 6. 7. When I ſay then, that our Reformation ſhould be a real Reformation, I mean, it ſhould not be Verbal onely; and therefore to ſuch a real Reformation I ſhall exhort you in the words of the *Pſalmiſt*, *Pſal.* 76. 11. *Vow, and Pay to the Lord your God.*

2. It muſt be, not barely an out-ſide, but an in-ſide Reformation; for Truth is in the inward parts: and this is it, which God deſireth, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, in that his Penitential *Pſalm*, Pſal. 51. 6.

The *Phariſees* had an out-ſide Reformation, *Luke* 11. 39. But woe, notwithſtanding, and woe again, ſays our Saviour, to ſuch Hypocritical Reformers, *Mat.* 23. 25. Be then exhorted in the words of St. *James*, Chap. 9. 8. *Cleanſe your Hands, ye Sinners, and Purifie your*

your Hearts, ye double-minded. Obſerve, hands and heart; not hands onely, but hearts alſo. I cannot ſay to you in this Caſe, as our Saviour ſaid to St. *Peter*, in another *John* 13. 9. *He that is waſhed, needeth not, ſave to waſh his feet* (his Hands, his out-ſide) but is clean every whit; yea, I muſt ſay the contrary: We need both waſhings (Hands and Heart, out-ſide and in-ſide) Yea, and the true Nature of the Reformation I am ſpeaking of, doth need, or require it.

3. It muſt be well grounded, *viz.* Upon a good Conſcience, (*i. e.*) a Conſcience of Gods Command, and not meerly upon the Command of any Man, or Men. A Reformation thus grounded, or Founded, is that which we call a true, (*i. e.*) a Morally true, or ſincere Reformation. That Reformation is in Morality no true Reformation, that is not thus grounded, (*i. e.*) it is not ſincere and upright. Herein that Reformation, which was made by the People, under the Reign of thoſe two Reforming Kings of *Judah*, (*Aſa* and *Joſiah*) did very much fail, as to a great part of the Body of the Nation, as appears, not onely by the Chronicle of thoſe times, but alſo by the Writings of the Prophets that were contemporary with thoſe Pious Princes; for it was more out of fear of Man, and Reſpect to Humane Ordinances, than out of the fear of God, and Con-

Conſcience of his Command, that the generality of the People did ſubmit as they did, and thence was their after-revolt upon the Death of thoſe Godly Kings. I ſhall then Exhort you in the ſame words as St. *Paul* doth Exhort Chriſtian Servants, *Col.* 3. 23. *Whatſoever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto Men.* Whatſoever we Reform, let it be as upon the Command of God, and not of Man meerly. Let Children, and Servants, and Subjects, whatever they Reform, Reform in the fear of God chiefly, and not onely as awed by their Parents, Maſters, Governours, under whoſe Power and Diſcipline they are.

SECT. XXVII.

2. OUR Reformation ſhould be an Orderly Reformation. Order is a very conſiderable Circumſtance in all our Enterprizes, and Undertakings, and duely to be Obſerved. We read in 1 *Chron.* 15, 13. that God was diſpleaſed, for that he was not ſought after the due Order. *Let all things*, ſays the Apoſtle, (1 *Cor.* 14. *last.*) *be done decently, and κατὰ τάξιν in Order.* Thus ſhould this work of Reformation be enterprized and carried on.

Q. How, or in what Order?

Answ. It should be,

1. Personal.
2. Private, or Domestical.
3. Publique.

This Order indeed is most comely, and well-becoming; and thus to set about the work is to do it at once, both κατὰ τάξιν & εὐσχημόνως, as well comely, as in Order. I will then, according to this Order, Exhort you,

1. To a Personal Reformation: Let self-Reformation be the first thing thought of, and endeavoured by us all. As Charity, so Piety should begin at home. A needful intimation this is; for how disorderly are we for the most part in this Matter, it being our manner to begin at the wrong end. Every one calls for a Reformation, a Reformation, and crys out by Reason of the want thereof. But of what Reformation? Or of whom? *Answ.* It is a reformation of Laws, not of Lives so much; they would have the Laws reformed (this Law, & that Law, and t'other Law, Ecclesiastical Law, Common Law, Civil Law-reformed) but in the mean while they are less sollicitous for the reformation of Lawless Lives and manner of mis-living. When I thus speak of Laws and Lives I would not be so mis-understood, as if so be we had no standing Law (for what Church or State is without some such?) that is truly a *Gravamen*;

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we have heard of the *Centum Gravamina* in *Germany*, at the beginning of the Reformation, Presented (as I Remember) in some of their Diets, to the Emperour *Charles* the Fifth, in Order to a redress. I beseech the Lord to make our King and Parliament wise as the Angels of God, to Judge rightly, what Laws of any kind are to be numbred among the *Gravamina* complained of; and having found them out, that they would remove them, as so many pricking Bryars, and grieving Thorns to the *Israel* of God. But these two things, I say,

1. That if our Lives were but Reformed according to our Laws, we should be an Happy People: Oh, by how many degrees more happy than we are, or are ever like to be, as now Lawless in our Lives we are!

2. The onely way to have our Laws Reformed (so far as Reason of State will permit) is to reform our Lives; if we would take care to reform the one, God would find out one blessed way or other by his good Providence to reform the other; he having the Hearts of King and Parliament in his own Hand, turning them as the Rivers of water as he pleaseth. But our sin and misery is, that the reformation of

See *Joel* 2. 18, 19, 20. *Then will the Lord be Jealous for his Land, and pity his People. Yea, the Lord* ---- Psal. 81. 13, 14. *O that my People had hearkened to my Voyce* ---- *I should soon have* ----

Lives is that which we are leſs mindful of, and ſollicitous for. Or if it be a reformation of Lives that is meant by the Common cry for reformation, and out-cry for want of it; Of whoſe reformation, or of whom, think we, is this noyſe by the moſt intended? Surely of the reformation of others, rather than of themſelves, as if others onely had need to be reformed, but the Common Cryer himſelf had no need at all. We would have all reformed but One, and that is our ſelves; we would have all things reformed, both in Church and State, but as to what is amiſs in our own Breaſts and Boſoms, in our own Lives and Converſations, we mind or care for no ſuch thing. The Laity would have the Clergy reformed, and the Clergy the Laity; the Commonalty would have the Gentry reformed, and the Gentry the Commonalty; the Rich the Poor, and the Poor the Rich; and thus we run round. So that if it be ſaid, That every man is a reformer, and yet no man is a reformer, it is not ſuch a riddle, but that it may eaſily be unfolded, and Interpreted according to what hath been already ſaid. It is not then without cauſe, or more than needs, that I ſhould again and again exhort and excite you, and that in the firſt place to this Perſonal reformation. Let us all, from the higheſt to the loweſt, imitate *Joſhua*, ſaying, *I and my Houſe will ſerve the Lord*, Joſh. 24. 15. Mark, I, and I in the

fore-front. Let every one first of all, and most of all see to himself. The Apostle exhorts the *Thessalonians* (*1 Thes.* 4. 11.) *That they would all study to be quiet, and to do τὰ ἴδιον their own business, their proper work.* A most memorable Scripture upon many accounts, intimating among other things, that as one Reason of Peoples unquietness, is, because they do not study quietness; so another is, because they do not confine themselves to their own business, but are busie-bodies in other mens Matters. But the reason of my quoting that Scripture, is to take Occasion from thence to Acquaint you, that self-reformation is τὸ ἴδιον, every ones own business, the proper work of every one, and as for other reasons by and by to be specified; so for that Reason in the first place, I shall exhort you to study it.

1. Inasmuch as God hath made it our own business, and that unquestionably. It is a Question in many cases, how far forth it is our business to Reform another, but it is out of Question, that self-reformation is my own proper work; for as for this work, every Man can do it best, and is bound to do it most.

1. Every Man can do it best; forasmuch as it is much more in a Mans power to Reform himself, than another; a Man having more Command also of himself, than he hath of another. It's true indeed, that without Gods

help and assistance we can do neither: For except the Lord help, how can we help, may we say in this case, even as did the King of *Israel* in another, 2 *Kings* 6. 27. Thence that Petition of *Ephraim* to God, *Jer.* 31.18. *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned.* Yet the one may be more easie comparatively with the other, as having less impediments than the other, and for that cause may be said to be most in a Mans power; as also because a Man may have that store of means in his own power to make use of at his pleasure, for the Reforming of himself, which are not in his power to use for the Reforming of another, as might be instanced in, were it not over-much to enlarge this particular. And thence it is, that if we speak of self-reformation, it may be truly said, that a Man may save himself, if he will, (*i. e.*) if he had a predominant will, or were prevalently desirous to do it, or had not a Will preponderating to the contrary; but it cannot be thus said with respect to the Saving, or Reforming of another. How sincerely, cordially, earnestly, vehemently willing were the Prophets and Apostles to Reform them, that never were, nor would be Reformed. See *Rom. 9. beg.* and 10. *beg.* The like proportionably may be said of the flagrant desires of Gods faithful Ministers and Pious Parents, for the Reforming of their People and Children, which it never was in their

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power to effect notwithſtanding.

2. Every Man is bound to do it moſt. This doth in ſome ſort follow from the former: Beſides, *Tunica pallio proprior*, as the Proverbs have it, every Man is neareſt to himſelf, is more concerned in his own woe, or welfare, than of another ſingle Perſon. Thence it is, that it is made a Miniſters firſt work, to ſee to the ſaving of himſelf, and then of thoſe that hear him, 1 *Tim.* 4. 16. and of this, ſee how careful St. *Paul* was by that his ſaying, 1 *Cor.* 9. *lat. I keep down my Body, and bring it into Subjection, leſt that by any means, when I have Preached to others, I my ſelf ſhould be a caſt-away.*

2. To perſwade you to this work of Self-reforming, in the firſt place, conſider, that till we have Reformed our ſelves, we are leſs likely to Reform others, though we ſhould endeavour it. I do not ſay, it is impoſſible (*Judas* might poſſibly Convert a ſinner to the Faith of Chriſt) but it is improbable, and exceeding rare, that God doth ſo far ſucceed with his bleſſing the Labours of a wicked Miniſter to the ſaving of Souls. And the Reaſon, or Reaſons hereof are ſo obvious, that to name them would be to leſs purpoſe.

3. The very attempting to reform another, is a very ſhame to, or in him, who hath not Reformed himſelf; for how doth he expoſe

himself by so doing unto that Reproach, *Rom.* 2. 21. *Thou that Teachest another, Teachest thou not thy self?* Thou, Thou, Thou, Thou -- And *Medice cura teipsum.* That which is comely and gracious work in another, is shameful and unbeseeming work in the Person I am speaking of; it doth no more become him, than a Jewel doth a Swines snout, as the Proverbs of *Solomon* hath it;

Turpe est doctori cum culpa redarguit ipsum.,

4. Consider, That if every sinner would study to do this his own work of self-reformation, it would prove the most effectual way to be quiet. Did every one of us study to do τὸ ἴδιον, τῶ τοῦ ἰδίου, this his own business, no man needs to study to be quiet; for quietness would follow of it self, even *per Modum resultantiæ*, a meer Physical, rather than as at all a Moral effect, or (to speak in the words of the Prophet *Esay*, Chap. 32. 17.) *The work of Righteousness would be Peace, and the effect of Righteousness Quietness and Assurance for ever.* And oh what an happy thing is it to be Quiet? Oh for a Quiet World! Oh for Quiet Times! *Da pacem Domine, da pacem.* O thou Divine Blessing, Quietness! Thou Heaven upon Earth! Let it be said of Peace, as it once was said concerning his Name, who was the Prince of Peace, Thou art *Mel in Ore, Melos in aure, & Jubilum in corde.* Would we Inherit this Divine Blessing

Bleſſing of Peace and Quietneſs, let us follow and ſtudy Perſonal Holineſs, Perſonal Reformation. And till we do this, let us never look for a Quiet World, for Quiet Times: For the very ſtudying to Reform others, while we take no care to Reform our ſelves, doth but diſ-ſettle things, and diſquiet both Church and State.

SECT. XXVIII.

2. BE Exhorted in the next place, to Labour a Private Reformation: Let every Houſholder Labour a Reformation in his Family. But having enlarged my ſelf ſo much in the former Exhortation, leſs ſaid in this may ſuffice; for he who hath Reformed himſelf, will not need much ſtirring up to endeavour in his Place and Calling a Reformation of others, he having that in his own Breaſt and Boſom, which will incite him, ſo that he will do it, *Motu proprio* and *αὐθαίρετος*, as is the Apoſtles Expreſſion concerning the *Macedonians* Charitable diſpoſition, 2 *Cor.* 8. 3. Hence it is, that the word in the *Hebrew* (*Haſhibu*, Ezek. 18. 30. 32.) doth ſignifie both to turn ones ſelf, and to turn others, and may indifferently be rendred either

either way, as the Margin in your Bibles doth inform you. This implyes, that he who is himself Converted, will endeavour the Converſion of others. I ſhall then (though not in many words) exhort all Parents and Miniſters, ſaying, in alluſion to thoſe words of St. *Paul*, in his Fare-well Sermon to the Elders of *Epheſus*, *Acts* 20. 28. *Take heed to your ſelves, and to all that Flock, or Family, over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you Overſeers.* As our Saviour ſaid to St. *Peter* (*Luke* 22. 32.. *Thou being Converted, ſtrengthen thy Brethren.*) So I ſay, Thou being Reformed, Reform thy Family. Imitate *David*, whoſe Reſolution touching himſelf, and his Court (what manner of Court he meant to keep, and what manner of Courtiers to have about him) may be read of at large, in *Pſal.* 101. the Pſalm throughout. A moſt worthy Pattern for all Princes, which every Houſholder alſo in his Capacity (he being as to his Family a Petty Prince) ſhould alſo imitate. Let *Joſhua* alſo be our Pattern, *Joſh.* 24. 15. *I and my Houſe will ſerve the Lord.* He reſoves for himſelf, but not for himſelf alone, to ſerve the Lord. Imitate *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, who for this obtained a good Report from God, who Teſtified of him, ſaying, *Gen.* 18. 19. *I know him, that he will Command his Children, and his Houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way*

of

of the Lord;--- We all profeſs our ſelves to be *Abraham*'s Children, but, as our Saviour ſaid to the Jews, *Mat.* 3.9. ſo ſay *I* to you, *Think not to ſay within your ſelves, that you have* Abraham *to your Father*, (*i. e.*) think not to ſay it, except you can prove it. And how may it be proved? *Anſw.* By this onely, *viz.* by doing the works of *Abraham*, ſo ſays our Saviour, *John* 18.39. *If you were* Abraham's *Children, you would do the works of* Abraham. Be then Exhorted to prove what you ſay, to approve your ſelves to be *Abraham*'s Children by doing the works, This work of *Abraham*, even by Commanding your Children, and your Houſhold after you, to keep the way of the Lord, to do Juſtice and Judgment, that in ſo doing, the Bleſſing of *Abraham* may come to them, and reſt upon you and them. As our Saviour ſaid (*Remember* Lot's *Wife*) ſo I ſay to every careleſs, and over-indulgent Parent, *Remember Eli*, take him for an Example; but how, or what manner of Example? Not for our Imitation, but for our Admonition; we have Examples of both ſorts upon Record in Scripture, for our Learning; the former Inſtructing us what to follow, the latter, what to fly; of which latter many are Recorded in 1 *Cor.* 10. The recitation, or Story whereof the Apoſtle concludes, ſaying, *v.* 11. *Now all theſe things happened unto them* τύποι, *for Types, or Enſamples, and they are*

Written

Written for our Admonition, upon whom the ends of the World are come. For an Enſample of this latter ſort, is the ſtory of *Eli* Recorded in Scripture: Let me therefore ſay again, *Remember Eli, and Remember both his ſin, and his Puniſhment.* Remember his ſin, Recorded in 1 *Sam.* 3. 13. (*His Sons made themſelves vile*, this he knew, *but he reſtrained them not.*) Yea, remember his ſin, not onely what it was in *ſpecie*, or for kind, but remember alſo what it was in *pondere*, or conſtructively, God himſelf being the Interpreter; this being written alſo for our Learning, 1 *Sam.* 2.29,30. Wherein God doth charge it upon him, as an honouring of his Sons more than him, even a deſpiſing of God, who had honoured him. And remember, as *Eli*'s ſin, ſo his puniſhment, both as Threatned, and as Executed; as Threatned, both generally, 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. and more particularly, *v.* 31. And as Executed, 1 *Sam.* 4. *laſt*; which Scriptures being written for the Learning of all Parents, what care they ſhould take for the Reforming of their Children, ſhould be read at leiſure, and accordingly made uſe of. I ſhall conclude this Exhortation to every Houſholder, in the words of *Zophar* to *Job*, Chap. 11. 14. *If Iniquity be in thy Hand, put it far away, and let not wickedneſs dwell in thy Tabernacles.*

SECT.

SECT. XXIX.

3. BE Exhorted to endeavour a Publique Reformation. The Truth is, that if every Man and Woman would mend One, then this Exhortation would be altogether needless, for thereupon all would be mended, according to the Common saying, If every one would sweep before their own Door, the whole Street and Town would be clean. But because it may rationally be presumed, that many things as to the Publique, will be still crooked and amiss, which will have need of rectifying: Let us all in our Places and Callings do as we can for a reformation there. To this End some Persons can do but little, but other Persons may do much, and both sorts are to be excited to do what they can.

1. Some are in a Capacity to do much more than others can, *viz.* Publique Persons, such as are in Publique place, briefly (to speak in the Language of the Apostle, 1 *Tim.* 2. 2.) *Kings and all that are ἐν ὑπεροχῇ in Authority*, the πεμπόμενοι (of whom St. *Peter* speaks, 1 *Pet.* 2. 14.) Such as are sent, or Commissioned by Kings.

Quest. What should these do for a Publique Reformation?

Answ. In short, They should do their Office, or

or what doth pertain to them in their Publique Capacity. In this Answer somewhat is supposed, which *I* do not therefore mention, *viz.* That these Governours, whether *Supreme* or Subordinate, do themselves keep the Law, and do give a good Example in their own Persons, *e. g.* That they are no Swearers, Drunkards, Whore-mongers, Extortioners, Neglecters, and Prophaners of the Lords Day, his Ordinances;--- This being supposed, it is enough to Answer as before. They are to do their proper Office, and *I* can say no less than this: For it is not enough for Governours to give a good Example in their own Persons, by keeping the Law so far as belongs to them in their Private Capacity, or as in Common with others; but they must also do what concerns them as Publique Persons: That is, they must see as much as in them lyes, that the Law be Executed, they being sent both by God and the King, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well, as St. *Peter* says expresly, 1 *Pet.* 2. 14. And if Governours of all sorts, Civil and Ecclesiastical, from the highest to the lowest, would do as aforesaid, *(i. e.)* would be Patterns of Vertue and Piety in their own Persons, well governing themselves in the first place, and then as Governours would be impartial in the Execution of Justice, punishing evil doers, and encouraging

ging them that do well. O what a Bleſſed, what a Publique Reformation would quickly enſue! But when Rulers are wicked, who being ſet in place to Judge others after the Law, do themſelves notoriouſly contrary to the Law; or, as *Gallio*, are altogether careleſs to Execute their Office: What ſhall I ſay, but this? *Conclamatum eſt*, as to a Publique Reformation. To him, who would ſhew himſelf a Sollicitour for ſuch a Reformation, I would ſay, with him, in the Comedy, *Actum eſt, illicet*, you may ſpare your pains, there is no hope; Paſt Cure, paſt Care. Let me then, in the Name of the moſt high God (who is *Rex Regum, & Dominus Dominantium*) Exhort and beſeech all ſorts of Governours to do their Office. He that Ruleth Men, ſhould be Juſt, Ruling in the fear of God, ſaid he, who himſelf was a Ruler, even the Annoynted of the God of *Jacob*, the ſweet *Pſalmiſt* of *Iſrael*, as he ſtiles himſelf, 1 *Sam.* 22. 1, 3. Now, for Rulers to do their Office, is to be Juſt; let them do it then, and let them do it in the fear of God. Let it not be ſaid, that ye bear the Sword in vain: Be ye a Terror to evil works, and workers of all ſorts: If poſſible, let no Sons of *Zerviah* be too ſtrong for you. Woe to that Kingdom or Nation where Lawleſs Perſons have onely got the Bitt in their mouths. I will therefore Conclude my Exhortation briefly, in

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allusion to those words of the Apostle, *Rom.* 12. 6, 7, 8. where as he exhorts respectively to the Diversity of Gifts, so shall I exhort respectively to the Diversity of Offices, Having different Offices according as God by his Providence, and the Laws of the Land have dispensed to you; Let every Officer (Magistrate and Minister) in the fear of God, wait upon his Office: Let them, who are of the Grand Jury, do their Office of Indicting Offenders: Let him that is in Commission for the Peace, do the Office of a Justice; Let Ministers wait on their Ministry (*Say to* Archippus, *Take heed to the Ministry, which thou hast received of the Lord, that thou fulfill it*, Col. 4. 17.) Let all Magistrates within their several Corporations and Jurisdictions, do the Office or work of their Magistracy, that at last we may all give up our Accounts to God with Joy, and not with Grief.

2. As for another sort of Persons, they can do but little comparatively towards a Publique Reformation, and by these, I mean Private Persons, who have no such Office as aforesaid. These have but a single Talent, a Widdows Mite, as I may so say. Yet, as St. *Peter*, having no Silver and Gold to give, gave notwithstanding, such as he had; so let these, being not Capacitated to do as they would, and as others may, yet do as they can. And to these I have

no

no more to commend (beside the Directions already given) than *Preces & Lacryme*, the Ancient Arms and Armour of the Church, Prayers and Tears; and respectively to these I shall say to every Man and Woman in their several places and Callings as the distressed Father said to our Saviour, in behalf of his poor Child (*Mark* 9. 22. *If thou canst do any thing, have Compassion on us, and help us.*) If ye can do any thing, have Compassion upon your Native Soil, pity a sinful, sinking, and divided Nation; help us as you can towards a publique Reformation (*i. e.*) Weep and pray, for this you can do: Sigh and weep (being sensible of your own sins in the first place) for the Abominations that you see, or hear of Committed throughout the Land, City, or Countrey. Smite with your Hand, and stamp with your Foot, and cry alas, for the evil Abominations of the Times, whethether in Laity, or Clergy, *Ezek.* 6. 11. But let us not weep and howl (I mean) weep and murmur, weep and rail, weep and revile (speaking evil of Dignities, and of things which we know not, the sin of that Old brood of Sectaries, mentioned by the Apostles, *Peter* and *Jude*) but let us weep and pray; & to this purpose, I will put you in remembrance of the words of the Apostle (1 *Tim.* 2. 1, 2, 3.) and with which *I* shall both beseech and exhort you, saying, *I exhort, that first of all, Supplications,*

cations, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving of Thanks be made for all Men; For Kings, and for all that are in Authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life, in all Godliness and Honesty. And Observe the Apostles Reason, whereby to excite us, he saying, *v.* 3. *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.* It is ill, when things are amiss in Church and State, to Swear and Curse, to rail and revile, it is un-acceptable both to God and Man; but to pray, this indeed is good (we have the suffrage of the Apostle for it) this is Acceptable, as well in the sight of Man (of Men our Governours) as in the sight of God our Saviour. And therefore *I* shall conclude this Matter, saying, with the same Apostle else-where, *Rom.* 12. 14. *Bless, and Curse not.* *I* say, Curse not; for even this, when our Passion boyls, and in a fretting Humour are sinners apt to do, looking upward to Curse their King and their God, *Esay* 8. 21. Let us weeping then, not Curse but bless; knowing (as St. *Peter* says, 1 *Pet.* 3. 9.) *That hereunto we were Called, that we may Inherit a Blessing,* that Blessing of Blessings, that Blessed Reformation as to the publique; to the promoting whereof, I have here more at large exhorted all Persons of all sorts in their places and Callings, to contribute their Christian Endeavours.

SECT.

SECT. XXX.

3. I Come now to a Third Qualification of the Reformation in hand, *viz.* It ſhould be an Impartial, or a Univerſal Reformation, not of this or that particular ſin onely, but of whatſoever is apparent to us to be ſuch. Our Impunity doth depend upon the doing, not of ſome onely, but upon the doing of all Gods Commandments. This is apparent by the 14 and 15 verſes of this 26 Chapter of *Leviticus*, *But if ye will not hearken to me, and will not do all theſe Commandments; And if ye ſhall deſpiſe my Statutes, or if your Soul abhor my Judgments, ſo that ye will not do all my Commandments, but that ye break my Covenant.* From theſe words is Obſervable, not onely that as to the Qualification of our Obedience to God it ought to be impartial and Univerſal (to all Gods Commandments) but it is further Obſervable, That to do ſome Commandments of God, and not make Conſcience of all, is not to hearken to God, and it is alſo to break Covenant with God. He is one that ſtops his Ears againſt God, and breaks Covenant with him, who doing ſome Commandments of God, doth abhor the doing of others. A Univerſal Reformation therefore, (*i.e.*) of one ſin as well as another, is that, which I am in this place to Direct and Exhort

you unto. This is that Reformation, which God doth by the Prophet *Ezekiel* Exhort unto, *Chap.* 18. 30. And I shall exhort you in the self-same words, *Repent, and turn your selves from all your Transgressions*; and v. 31. *Cast away from you all your Transgressions, whereby you have Transgressed.* This is the way to prevent seven times more for our sins: For, says the Prophet in that self-same place, *So Iniquity shall not be your Ruine.* It was *Jehu's* defect, and that which was the Ruine of him and his Posterity, that he was but a partial Reformer, and partially Reformed; onely so far as concerned the Idolatry of the House of *Ahab*, still serving his State-Interest, in retaining, and upholding the sin of *Jeroboam*. Contrary was that Reformation of *Josiah*, for which by the King of Kings he is Commended, 2 *Kings* 23. 25. *And like unto him was there no King before him, that turned to the Lord with all his Heart, and with all his Soul, and with all his Might, according to all the Law of* Moses. Such a Personal Reformer was *David*, Psal. 119. 67. *Before I was Afflicted*, says he, *I went astray, but now have I kept thy Word*, (i. e.) not onely this or that part of Gods Word, but his Word, *in toto, ac in solido*, his whole Word, having respect unto all Gods Commandments, as is his Expression, *v.* 6. the thing for which God Commends him, saying,

ing, *Acts* 13.22. *I have found* David *after my own heart, that shall fulfill* πάντα τὰ θελήματά μου, *All my Evils.* Thus to do is to do after Gods own heart. And this is that Reformation which I do Exhort unto; but withal suggesting and saying, Let our Reformation be such, as that it may not onely be stiled (*absolutè loquendo*) Universal, but that in some respects it may be also styled special: I mean, let us Reform some more special sins, which I shall instance in, as calling for a special Reformation.

1. Your *Diana*-sins, your *Isaac*'s, your *Dalilahs*, your *Agag*'s, (*i. e.*) Your most beloved sins, your Kingly Corruptions, those to which you have been most enslaved, such as by the pleasures and profit whereof you have been hitherto most besotted, and bewitched, any wicked Course of Life, whereby, like *Demetrius* and his Crafts-men, you have had your ἐυπορία, made an Advantage, and been gainers in the World. These kind of sins for the most part are secret from the Eye of the World, and for that reason also sinners may have need of a special remembrance to reform these. Let us remember, that as when we pray, so also when we sin, we sin against our Heavenly Father, who sees in secret, and will reward us openly.

2. Let our reformation be especially of more notorious and scandalous sins. In the

Name of God let ſcandals be reformed. O ceaſe to declare your ſins, as *Sodom*, and hide them for ſhame; hide them for your own ſake, and hide them for Gods ſake, and the honour of the Goſpel, that the Name of Chriſt and his Doctrine be not Blaſphemed.

3. Let our Reformation be of ſuch ſins as are in their own Nature (however ſeparated, or abſtracted from ſcandal) more hainous. As there be *Magnalia Legis*, ſo there be *Magnalia contra Legem*, Sins of great repugnancy to the Divine Law. And as all ſin is more or leſs contrary to God, ſo the greater the ſin is, the greater is its contrariety unto him. Some ſins are called great Provocations [*Nehem.* 9. 18. 26. *They wrought great Provocations*,] Bitter Provocations, (*Hoſ.* 12. 14. *Ephraim Provoked the Lord to Anger moſt bitterly.*) Mighty ſins, (*Amos* 5. 12. *I know your manifold Tranſgreſſions, and your Mighty ſins.*) Wonderful and horrible ſins (*Jer.* 5. *last. A Wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the Land.*) Grievous ſins (*Lam.* 1. 8. *Jeruſalem hath grievouſly ſinned.*) And whoſe cry is like the cry of the ſins of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, of which the Lord himſelf (being diſquieted therewith) ſays, *Gen.* 18. 20. *That it was great and very grievous.* What theſe kind of ſins are, not onely the Light without us and about us (*I* mean, the Holy Scripture) but the Light within us doth

Diſco-

Discover; this is known by Natural, but more abundantly by Super-natural Revelation. O let us be exhorted to cease from such. As our Saviour says, *Mat.* 6. 16. *When ye Fast, be not as the Hypocrites*: In like sort do I Admonish you, saying, When ye Reform, be not as the Hypocrites, do not as the Hypocritical *Pharisees* did, (*i. e.*) Do not strain at Gnats, and swallow Camels, (*i. e.*) Do not pretend Conscience of avoyding lesser sins (about Vestures, Gestures, Ceremonies) in the mean time making no bones, no scruple of great sins, living in the neglect of the great things of Gods Law, Judgment, Righteousness, and Faith, the Love of God, and the Love of your Brethren.

4. Let there be a special Reformation of those sins, whereby more especially and visibly God hath been provoked to punish us seven times (*i. e.*) much more than formerly. These oft-times before Judgments be inflicted are most apparent, and written as in Letters Capital, if I may so say, in allusion to those words of the Prophet *Jeremy* (Chap. 17. 1. *The sin of Judah is written with a Pen of Iron, and with the Point of a Diamond, it is graven upon the Horns of your Altars.*) In which sence there be those, who would have that Expression of the Apostle to be understood, he saying (1 *Tim.* 5. 24. *Some mens sins are open before-*

hand, going before to Judgment.) What these sins are it is not for a great part hard to say. Our Consciences, though at other times asleep, yet being awakened with the Vengeance of God, will at such a time be upon our backs, rating us in such sort, as *Reuben* did his Brethren, saying, *Gen.* 42. 21, 22. *We are verily guilty concerning our Brother*; ---- You have been thus, and thus, and thus guilty; and as *Reuben* concludes the charge, saying, *Therefore his Blood is required*; such is the Conclusion of an accusing Conscience; *Therefore this, this and this heavy distress and punishment is upon us.* Read the Confession of sinners under their sufferings, *Jer.* 14. 7. *Our Iniquities testifie against us.* And *Esay* 59 12. *Our Transgressions are multiplyed before thee, and our sins testifie against us; for our Transgressions are with us, and as for our Iniquities we know them,* (i. e.) Not barely know what they are, but also what mischief they have done us, and the evils which they have brought upon us. Let us then be exhorted to a special Reformation of all such known sins; sins we do know, and cannot but know (if we will believe our own Consciences) to have been the cause of our sufferings. Observe the Sermons of the Prophets, and we shall find, that therein they do all along exhort the People (high and low, Prince, Priest, and People) to Reform such sins, as afore-said, which

which because it is of Observation so frequent and obvious, I will therefore forbear to quote particular places in their Sermons.

5. Reform especially in your selves the sins of the Times, (*i. e.*) such sins as the generality of Men and Women in the places where you live are guilty of. This is a needful intimation, as for other Reasons, so for this, *viz.* Such sins, because Common are accounted as no sins at all, or next to none; or, as *Lot* said of *Zoar*, little ones; and which may therefore be (as Men are apt to think) well tolerated and excused from Reformation. If a sin be in Fashion, who makes account the Fashion to be a sin? Whatever is the garb of the Times, we are apt to think it warrantable upon that very account, however unaccountable it be otherwise to Scripture, Reason, and Common sence. Although as Christians at our solemn Initiation we have forsworn the Pomps and Vanities of this wicked World, yet how apt are we to follow the World therein? And after all, like the Adulteress in *Prov.* 30. 20. *To wipe our mouths, and say, we have done no wickedness.* But let such vain Imaginations be far from us, and let us make full account, as the very Truth is, That a sin by how much it is more Common, by so much it is the more grievously provoking to God, and hasteneth Judgments the sooner, and ripening

sinners

sinners for Divine Vengeance, as might easily be proved by several Scriptures, and the thing it self be exemplified by the Destruction of the Old World by Water, of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* by Fire, and of *Israel* and *Judah* by the Sword, for which, see *Gen.* 6. 12, 13. and 19. 9. and 18. 33. *Jer.* 6. 13. and 7. 9. *Dan.* 9. 11. O then let there be a special Reformation of National sins: *Phil.* 2. 15. *Walk blameless and harmless as the Children of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation--- Holding forth the Word of Life.* As God said to the Prophet *Jeremiah* (*Chap.* 15. 19. *Let them return to thee, but do not thou return to them.*) So let me say to those, who are not as yet over-taken by the Pomps and Vanities, or in Love with the sinful Fashions of this wicked World; Let them return to you, but do not you return to them. If the wicked multitude shall sollicite us to any evil, saying, with those Enticers (*Prov.* 1. 11.) *Come with us*: Let us remember the inhibition, *Exod.* 23. 3. *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.* Imitate *Noah* (a Man of the Old World) who had this Testimony from God, That he was Just and Upright in his Generation, and one that walked with God, when the whole World was drown'd in sin, and for sin, *Gen.* 6. 9. Imitate *Joshua* (a Man of the New World) saying to the Body of *Israel* convened

ned in their Elders, or Representatives, *Chap.* 24 15. *If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve, whether the gods --- But as for me and my House we will serve the Lord.* Most Nobly resolved, O thou Man of God, and Renowned Captain! Let us all follow him as our Leader to the Heavenly *Canaan*; and let the Giants of the world, (I mean) the Great Men, and Rich Men, and Chief Captains, and Mighty Men (as are the Expressions *Rev.* 6. 16.) Choose whom they will serve, Christ, or *Belial*; God, or the Devil; God or *Mammon*; let us serve the Lord, and Resolve so to do, imitating *Joshua*, as well in his Resolution, as in the thing it self resolved upon, as indeed there is great Reason; for he that would swim against the stream, and Reform that special thing in himself, which is generally unreformed in others among whom he Lives, had need be like *Joshua*, a Resolved Man; or (to speak in the Language wherewith *Moses* doth seek to inspirit and animate *Joshua*, as his design'd Successor, *Chap.* 1. 7.) He had need be a very strong and Couragious Man; whereupon let me exhort you, in the words of the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 16. 13. *Quit you like Men, be strong, even in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might*, as is added, *Ephes.* 6. 10.

6. Let our Reformation be positive as well

as privative, I mean, Let us Reform, not onely as to ſins of Commiſſion, but alſo as to ſins of Omiſſion; let us not onely put off the Old Man, but put on the New Man alſo, *Eph.* 4. 22, 23. *Let us not onely caſt off the works of darkneſs, but let us put on the Armour of Light*, Rom. 13. 12. *Joſiah* is a worthy pattern for this kind of Reformation; for as he did pull down one kind of Worſhip [Idol-worſhip] ſo he did ſet up another kind of Worſhip, the Worſhip of the true God, 2 *Chron.* 34. *laſt.* The like Reforming King was *Hezekiah*, what worſhip he pull'd down, is recorded in 2 *Chron.* 31. *the beginning of the Chapter*; and what worſhip he did ſet up, we read in the latter end thereof. As our Saviour therefore ſaid in the cloſe of the Parable of the good *Samaritan*, *Ito tu, fac ſimiliter*, ſo I ſay to every Perſon of what rank ſoever, *Go, and do thou likewiſe.* This is a Uniform Reformation. And we have many Acts upon Record in the Book of God, I mean, Divine Statutes, or ſtrict Commands from God (the onely Law-giver, who is able to ſave, and to deſtroy) for ſuch a Uniformity; I will rehearſe ſome of them in your hearing, *Eph.* 4. 29. *Let no Corrupt Communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, to the uſe of Edifying, that it may miniſter grace to the Hearers.* O for Conformity to this Act! O that our Tongues were not onely not ſet on

fire

fire of Hell (Curſing and Swearing) but that they were touch'd with a Coal from Gods Altar, inflamed with Zeal in ſpeaking to the glory of God, and the Edification one of another, *Eſay* 1. 16. *Ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well.* O for more Conformity to this Act! O that Great Men, O that all and every one would not onely ceaſe and labour to ſuppreſs Swearing, Curſing, Drunkenneſs, *&c.* in their Houſes, but that they would learn to do well, by ſetting up inſtead thereof, Reading the Scriptures, and Praying, that their Houſes, whereas they were *Bethavens*, may from hence forward become *Bethels*. See another Act to the ſame purpoſe, 1 *Tim.* 6. 11. *But thou O Man of God flee theſe things, and follow after Righteouſneſs.* It is not we Miniſters alone, that are concerned in this Act of Uniformity; for ſee the ſame enforc'd upon one of the Laity, 3 *John* 11. *Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good.* O that we all (Miniſters and People) would expreſs a unanimity and Conformity to the ſaid Acts for a Uniform Reformation: For as many as walk according to thoſe Canons, Peace ſhall be upon them, and upon the *Iſrael* of God.

Mat. 3. 10. Remember, *That every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit is to be hewen down and caſt into the fire.* Meer Privations ſignifie little in Divinity as well as in Philoſophy.

SECT

SECT. XXXI.

4. A Fourth Qualification of our Reformation, is, That it be ſpeedy, not dilatory. A needful intimation this: For beſides that of our ſelves we are very prone to delay, the Devil (that *Abaddon* and *Apollyon*, the Grand Enemy to all Reformation) will be ſure to Act a Devils part, (*i. e.*) he will lay all the rubs and blocks in our way that he can; and he will employ his Agents, as ſo many Serpents, whereby to perſwade delays; I mean, our vain and vile Companions, who will tell us many a fair and lying ſtory, ſuch as wherewith the Serpent beguiled *Eve*. And indeed that ſinner who will not Reform till the Devil, the World, and his Fleſh will give him leave, ſhall never be Reformed, but dye in his ſin. Let us then be exhorted according to our Baptiſmal Covenant, to fight againſt the Devil, the World and the Fleſh. *Reſiſt the Devil*, ſaith St. *James*, Chap. 4. 7. *Give not place to him*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *Eph.* 4. 7. I add, neither give place to his Agents and Emiſſaries, οὐδὲ πρὸς ὥραν, no, not for an hour, as the Apoſtle teſtifies of himſelf, that he did in alike Caſe, certain of the Devils Inſtruments being crept in at unawares to Corrupt the Church of *Galatia*, Chap. 2. 5. Strive to overcome

come whatsoever comes, or is cast athwart the way (like the Body of *Amasa*, 2 *Sam.* 20. 12.) to hinder us in our pursuit of a speedy Reformation. Imagine God himself putting you forwards, as with a Spur, in those words of his, by the Prophet *Joel*, Chap. 2. 12. *Now therefore turn to the Lord with all your Heart.* Now therefore. And why Now? Yea, why not now? O consider the Reasons for it, and the no Reason that can be imagined against it.

1. Consider the Common Proverb, wherein we say no less truly, than usually, Delays are dangerous; and if in any thing, even in things of common concernment, how much more in the thing I am now Exhorting unto, which because it is of such moment and consequence, I may therefore style it the *Unum necessarium*, The One thing needful. Delays in any thing are like to prove to our cost, and much more in this. Consider the mischiefs, the manifold mischiefs of delays in the present Case; mischief, I mean, whether certain, or possible at least, *e.g.*

1. It may be truly said, Now, or never, (*i.e.*) Possibly never. For now is the time for Reformation. Now is the accepted time; Now is the day of Salvation, 2 *Cor.* 6. 2. Yet a little while, and we shall be past Reforming, as hath been already intimated in the handling

of

of the first point of Doctrine.

2. But the certain mischiefs are,

1. That our delays will cost us dear, in that they will provoke God to punish us seven times more for our sin; so that if we get any thing by our delay of Reforming, it will be blows, and nothing but blows; blows upon blows, shame upon shame, losses upon losses -- So that as is said (*Rev.* 22. 11. *He that is filthy let him be filthy still*, (i. e.) at his peril be it.) In like sort do I say in the present case, He that delays his Reformation, let him delay it still, but at his own peril be it.

2. The longer we delay our Reforming, the farther and farther off still and still we shall undoubtedly be, and that upon a manifold account; for,

1. We shall have less mind and heart to Reform.

2. We shall have less Power and strength to do it: For sin doth besott, bewitch, and enfeeble the sinner. *Whoredome, and Wine, and New Wine take away the Heart*, Hos. 4. 11. And sin through its deceitfulness will more and more harden the sinner, and indispose him to a Reformation.

3. As for Impediments from without, they will still be the same, or increase and grow upon us. As St. *Paul* said in another Case (2 *Thes.* 2. 7. *He who now letteth, will let, till he*

he be taken out of the way.) In like sort may it be said, That those lets and Temptations, that do now let and hinder our Reformation, will hinder it, till by resistance and Victory they be taken out of the way. Yea, impediments by Reason of our delays will grow upon us, even as Neighbour Enemies will more and more multiply against a Nation, when they do perceive their weaknesses, security, neglect to stand upon their Guard, unpreparedness for their own Defence, irresolution, and the like. O then, let no sinner content himself with bare purposes and promises of Reformation. As our Saviour said to his Disciples, *If ye Love them that Love you, what do you more than others?* In like sort shall I say to you, If being under the Afflicting Hand of God, you do purpose onely, and promise that ye will Reform, what do you more than others? Than those Hypocrites, of whom it is said (*Psal.* 78. 36.) that by their promises they did but Flatter him with their Lips, and lyed unto him with their Tongues. Yea, if we do onely promise to Reform, what do we more than hard-hearted *Pharaoh*, who being under the Plagues of God, did promise and protest, saying to *Moses* and *Aaron*, (Exod. 9. 28. *Intreat the Lord (for it is enough) that there be no more mighty Thundrings and Hail, and I will let you go.*) Nor was this the first Promise that he

made upon this Occasion; for he promised it before upon the like Occasion once and again, as appears by the fore-going Chapters. Let sinners then be Exhorted without delay to reform. We have long and long already put off God with Promises and Purposes of Reformation, the thing it self being still delayed; now therefore let us delay no longer. Gods Command to the sinner touching his Reformation, is of the same tenour as was that of the Father to his Son, saying, (*Mat.* 21. 28. *Son, go work* [*Σημερον, To Day*] *in my Vineyard*; in like sort doth God say to the sinner, Sinner, go work the work of Reformation This Day, This Day Reform. I Conclude this Exhortation with the words of the Apostle, *Heb.* 3. 7. 15. *To Day if ye will hear his Voyce* (calling upon you to Reform) *harden not your Hearts.*

SECT. XXXII.

5. THE Fifth and Last Qualification of our Reformation, which I shall instance in, and Exhort unto, is, That it be permanent and constant. We are so to turn from sin, as never to turn to it again. This is that Refor-

Reformation, which God requires of sinners, *viz.* So to turn to him, as from thence forward never to depart from him, *Deut.* 5. 29. *O that they would fear me, and keep my Commandments always.* Be ye then exhorted to Constancy in this Matter. *He that is Righteous let him be Righteous still; and he that is Holy, let him be Holy still,* Rev. 22. 11. He that is a Reformed Man, let him as a Reformed Man still continue. Let such say, with *Ephraim, Hos.* 14. 8. *What have I to do any more with Idols?* With Swearing, Cursing; with Pipe and Pot, Pot and Pipe (thus running round from Morning to Night, and from House to House) with vain and vile Companions, *&c.* Let us not onely Reform, or be Reformed while we are under the sore Plagues and Punishments of God, nor onely while we are under Pious and strict Governours, that will see to the Execution of wholsome Laws (such as *Asa, Josiah,* and *Hezekiah* were) not onely while we are under the inspection of Religious Parents and Masters (such as *Abraham* was) but let us continue in well doing, when Gods Hand of Judgment is removed, when we are grown up from being under Tutors and Governours, and when we are become our own Masters.

Psal. 119. 32. Being set at Liberty to run whither we list, let us, with *David,* run the way of Gods Commandments.

O take heed of Revolting after punishment ceased: Do not verifie that Scripture-Proverb, 2 *Pet.* 2. *last.* *The Dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the Sow, that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire.* Such Revolting after Personal and Publique Calamities is a sin too frequent in the World, as is visible in sad Experience. It was the great sin of Gods *Israel* of Old, a great part of the Book of *Judges* being taken up in relating their frequent Revolts, respectively whereunto I may not unfitly Admonish you, in allusion to the words of the Apostle, (1 *Cor.* 10. 7, 8, 9, 10. *Neither be ye Idolaters, Fornicators, Murmurers, as some of them were.*) Be not ye Revolters after Gods punishments inflicted, and removed, as too too many of them were; and I may well add, as doth the Apostle, saying, *Lest ye be destroyed of the destroyer*: For all such Revolting is very sad, and will have a bad and dreadful end, in so much as St. *Peter* says (2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21.) *That if after we have escaped the Pollution of the World, we are again intangled therein, and overcome, the latter end will be worse with us than the beginning; and that it had been better for us not to have known the way of Righteousness, than after we have known it, to turn from the Holy Commandment delivered unto us.* It concerns us to know, that as a partial, so a Temporary Reformation will stand us in little,

or

or no ſtead; poſſibly, as St. *Paul* ſays of Bodily Exerciſe, it may profit us πρὸς ὀλίγον for a little time, or for a little Advantage, as *Ahab*'s Humiliation was profitable to him (I ſay, for a little time; for ſo the word ὀλίγον ſometimes ſignifies, 1 *Pet.* 5. 10.) But it is not this Reformation, but onely that impartial and permanent Reformation, and which is true Godlineſs, that can profit us as to that Life which is to come. Let us all then take heed of Relapſing, a thing dangerous to a Proverb. Imitate *David*, who ſays of himſelf, *Pſal.* 119. 112. *I have inclined my Heart to perform thy Statutes Always* (and as if it had not been enough to ſay Always, he adds) *even unto the end.* I ſhall conclude my Exhortation with the concluding words of that long Chapter, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. *Therefore my beloved Brethren, be ye ſtedfaſt and unmovable.* Let it be ſaid of your Reformation as the *Pſalmiſt* ſaid of Mount *Zion*, *Pſal.* 125. 1. *That it cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.*

SECT. XXXIII.

2. I Come now to the Second kind of Direction promised to be insisted upon, (*i. e.*) A Direction to such means as are Natively conducing to that Reformation which I have so largely opened in the Nature thereof, and exhorted unto; and herein I do judge, that very much of sure and sound Direction may be gathered from the words of my Text, and which I will endeavour to improve to the uttermost, by keeping close to it (as *Ruth* did to *Boaz* his Reapers) and as little expatiating from it into any other Field, as well may be. And in the first place I shall think meet to give you Notice of the main Impediments to Reformation, and Admonishing you to take heed of them, and to remove them out of the way. I will as I go along acquaint you with the contrary Prescripts or Remedies to be made use of. Know then, that the main Impediments to the reformation of sinners under the Afflicting Hand of God, and the common causes of Incorrigibleness, are such as these.

1. Not considering the Author of our Sufferings, who it is that doth punish us, not looking up to Gods hand, as therein lifted up; looking upon them as coming of Course, by Chance, or Fortune; or at least, looking no farther than

those,

those who are the Instruments of our Sufferings. Three things are here to be proved.

1. That if we are punished, it is God who doth punish us.

2. That it is our common fault, that we look not up to the Hand of God in that Case.

3. That this is a main Cause of our Incorrigibleness.

1. As for the first particular, it is of easie proof, and I have already spoken unto it (as a thing implyed in my Text) in the first branch of the Use of Information, for which cause I need say little or nothing more to it in this place, but refer you to what hath been already said in that its proper place. Onely I shall instance in certain particular punishments, whereby sinners are sometimes punished, and shew you, how Scripture doth still ascribe them to God, or Divine Providence, *e.g.* [To let pass Plague and Pestilence, Drought and Famine, Fire and Sword] Are we punished by home-divisions and inteſtine Wars? See whence this is, *Esay* 19.2. *I will*, says God, *set the* Egyptians *against the* Egyptians, *and they shall Fight every one against his Brother, and every one against his Neighbour; City against City, and Kingdom against Kingdom. And*, says God, *Jer.* 13. 14. *I will dash them one against another.* Is it by the Rebellion of their Subjects that Princes do suffer at Home? See 1 *Kings* 11.11, 12.

12. *And the Lord said to* Solomon, *Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my Covenant --- I will surely rent the Kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy Servant* -- Is it by a Combination of Forreign Enemies, that a King, or Kingdom Suffers? See what the Lord says, *Esay* 9. 11, 12. *I will set up the Adversaries of* Rezin *against him, and joyn his Enemies together*; *The* Syrians *before, and the* Philistines *behind, and they shall devour* Israel *with open mouth.* See also 1 *Kings* 11. 14. 23. Is it by change of Government, or Governours? See *Psal.* 75. 7. *God is the* Judge, *he putteth down one, and setteth up another*: And *Dan.* 2. 21. *God changeth the Times and Seasons, He removeth Kings, and setteth up Kings.* Is it by an Evil Spirit of Jealousie and Treachery, that a Place, or People are punished? See *Judg.* 9. 23. *Then God sent an evil Spirit between* Abimelech *and the Men of* Shechem; *and the Men of* Shechem *dealt Treacherously with* Abimelech. Doth any suffer by the Disobedience, and Disloyalty of bad Children? See 2 *Sam* 12. 11. *Thus saith the Lord, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and,* &c.

2. As for the Truth of the second particular, Experience doth manifest it. As for Instruments, it is our manner to look at all that are in our way, and if they do not presently appear, but

but lye hid, it is our manner, like Dogs of the Game, to Hunt after them, and to beat about, whereby to find them out. But all this while we do not look through them, or above them; being like the Horſe and Mule, that have no Underſtanding; or like the Curriſh Dog, that doth onely run after the ſtone that is cast at him, not at all regarding the Hand that hurl'd it. This is that brutiſhneſs, which God complains of, *Eſay* 26. 11. *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not ſee.* And this alſo is a ſin implyed in the words of my Text, according to another rendring of the Phraſe (*If ye walk contrary unto me,*) and which ſome do adhere unto; the *Hebrew* word ſignifying both contrariety and chance, according to which latter reddition of the word, the meaning is, If ye walk at all Adventures, careleſsly, come on't what will, not regarding your puniſhments as proceeding from the hand of God, but as coming by chance.

3. That this regardleſsneſs of God as the Author of our puniſhments, is one main cauſe of Incorrigibleneſs, doth appear both by Reaſon and Scripture. It cannot well be expected, that ſinners ſhould return to the Lord, till ſuch times as they are ſenſible, that it is he, who hath ſmitten, torn, or wounded them, *Hoſ.* 6. 1. Or till they do acknowledge (to ſpeak in the words of God himſelf in the one

and

and fortieth verſe of this Chapter) that it is God that hath walked contrary to them, in the puniſhments that were upon them. *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians* regarded not the Credentials of *Moſes* in thoſe miraculous Plagues that were inflicted on them, till they were convinced that they proceeded from God, acknowledging the print of his finger in them.

For a Remedy then in this Caſe, be exhorted to Obſerve and Confeſs, that under all our puniſhments, it is God who walks contrary unto us; whatever our Suffering be, ſay of it, as the King of *Iſrael* did of that Famine at the Siege of *Samaria*, 2 *Kings* 6. 33. *This evil is of the Lord.* As the Prophet ſaid in another Caſe, *Eſay* 46. 8. So I ſay here, *Remember this, and ſhew your ſelves Men*, (*i.e.*) Men, and not Brutes, which look no further than their outward ſenſes will enable them to do, having not the underſtanding of Men, or Rational Creatures to do more. As for Inſtruments, it is our wiſdom ſometimes not to look at them all, but it is our wiſdom always to look through and above them unto God. This is ſhort work, and ſafe work.

Mic. 6 9. Hear, as the Rod it ſelf, ſo who hath appointed, or inflicted it.

1. As to the Iſſue, it is ſhort work; for if we look after the Inſtruments of our Sufferings, it is oft-times a long piece of work, and a work of

of difficulty to find them out, they having dig'd deep to hide their Councels, and their ways being in the dark. But if we will but open our Eyes, we may presently discern God to be the Author of our Calamities.

2. This is sure and safe work; for as to the Grand Instruments of our Sufferings, we may hunt (as unexperienced Hounds sometimes do) upon a wrong scent, and think that we have found out the *Achans*, the Instruments of our Grievances, who indeed are not so. A mistake oft-times of sad and dangerous consequence. Thus did *Ahab* mistake in eying the Prophet *Elijah* as the Troubler of *Israel*, 1 *Kin.* 18. 17, 18. But as to the Author, or Inflicter of our Sufferings, in this surely we cannot be mistaken; but whensoever, or howsoever we suffer, we may safely say, with Repenting *Ephraim*, Jer. 31. 18. *Thou hast Chastised me, and I was Chastised*; and this is the first thing, which as one means conducing to our Reformation; By These things, (*i.e.*) by our Chastisements I do exhort you unto, and that not without Cause: For had we not heard this acknowledgment from *Ephraim* (*Thou hast Chastised me*) in all probability we had not heard of *Ephraim*'s Repentance and Conversion in the words immediately following.

SECT.

SECT. XXXIV.

2. ANother Impediment to Reformation, or Cauſe of Incorrigibleneſs, is ſinners their not Obſerving, at leaſt, their ſlighting and deſpiſing, and not laying to Heart the Judgments of God which are upon them. This is a ſin too too Common among Men, in that they deſpiſe the Judgments of God, not onely when threatned, and impendent, but when inflicted and incumbent upon them, either taking no notice at all of their Afflicted Condition, or not laying it to Heart: This the Prophet of God doth frequently Complain of, *Hoſ.7.9. Strangers have devoured his Strength, yet he* (meaning *Ephraim*) *knoweth it not; yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not.* And *Eſay* 42.25. *He hath poured upon him the fury of his Anger, and the ſtrength of Battel, and it hath ſet him on Fire round about, yet he knew it not, and it burned him, yet he laid it not to Heart.* The Pride of ſinners under their Sufferings doth teſtifie to their Faces, that they do not ſo know their afflicted Condition, as to lay it to Heart. This is the Evidence of the Prophets Judgment brought in againſt *Ephraim*. And the Proof is Apodeictical, or Demonſtrative, and paſt all denyal. This Pride of Heart, notwithſtanding

ding Gods Judgments on them, was their sin also complained of by the Prophet *Esay*, Chap. 9. 9, 10. Where *Ephraim* is accused for saying, in the Pride and stoutness of their Hearts, *The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewen stone --- q. d.* We will soon repair all our losses and breaches made by the *Assyrians*, their Impressions and Incursions into our Countrey. And oh how like to *Ephraim* is *England* in her Pride, notwithstanding the heavy punishments of God upon us? *Ovum ovo non similius. Judah* was not more like her Sister *Ephraim*, than is this our *Sion*, proud *England* like to both of them. O how doth the Pride of *England* (City and Country) testifie to our Faces, that we do not at all lay to heart, or are humbled in the sence of the manifold Judgments of God, that of latter times have been, and still are upon us? O what Cause to say of *England*, as once was of *Ephraim*, *Esay* 28. 1. *Woe to its Crown of Pride.* Woe to all the Sons and Daughters of Pride, *to those haughty Daughters of* Zion. *who walk with stretched forth Necks, and wanton Eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinckling with their Feet*, as the Prophet there doth paint them forth, as to their proud demeanour, *Esay* 3. 16. But doth presently pull off, and deface that painting, by threatning them

Read from verse 15. to verse 25.

in

in the verſes following, *Therefore will the Lord ſmite with a Scab the Crown of the Head of the Daughters of* Zion, *and the Lord will diſcover their Secret parts* -- As they in their Pride have made themſelves naked, ſo God will take his Time in his diſdain to ſtrip them naked, as his own expreſſion, *v.* 17. As alſo by the mouth of his Prophet *Hoſea* (Chap. 2. 3. *Leſt I ſtrip her Naked, and ſet her as in the day ſhe was born.*) The Lord God in Mercy humble us all, and affect thoſe who are moſt concerned in the reading of theſe lines, if they ſhall ever come to their ſight, and become Legible in Print. But (to return) as the Prophet *Eſay* having ſaid, *Woe to the Crown of Pride*, adds immediately, *To the Drunkards of* Ephraim; ſo that this ſaying brings to my mind another grievous ſin, that doth teſtifie to the Faces of ſinners, That they do deſpiſe, and not at all lay to heart the Judgments of God upon us, and that is, the ſin of Senſuality, and Luxury, Rioting and Drunkenneſs, Carnal Mirth and Jollity. Theſe are the ſins which God complains of, and denounceth a woe againſt, ſaying, *Eſay* 5. 11, 12. *Woe unto them that riſe up early in the Morning, that they may follow ſtrong Drink, and continue untill Night, till Wine inflame them: And the Harp and the Viol, the Tabret and Pipe are in their Feaſts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, nor con-*

consider the Operation of his Hands: Meaning at least, more especially the Judgments of God upon them. The like sin Complained of, and threatned, See in *Esay* 22. 12, 13. which may be read at leisure. And O that God would give us to see, what woes do hang over the Heads of Thousands in this Luxurious Age for their continued Drunkenness and intemperance of all sorts, that will abate nothing, that tends to the satisfying of their insatiable Lusts, let God and his Judgments, the Lord by his Judgments upon us call for what he will. This manifests how far we are, not onely from a present Reformation, but also from all hopes of a Reformation; for till we lay to heart the heavy hand of God upon us, we are never like to be bettered, or Reformed by it, which was the thing to be proved: For a Remedy therefore, and in Order to our being Reformed by these things, I shall in the Name of God Admonish you not to despise them, but to be, as is meet, affected with them: I shall do both in the words of God himself, speaking to us, *Heb.* 12. 5. *My Son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord.* And 1 *Pet.* 5. 6. *Humble your selves under the Mighty hand of God.* Let all the Ensignes of Pride be folded up in such black and sad Times as these; even as it is the manner of the Papists to cover their Images with black, that they may not be seen (if I

do

do not mis-remember) in time of *Lent*; to let no Image, or Picture of Pride in this Time of *Englands* Fears and Troubles be ſeen among us. The like I ſay concerning Drunkenneſs, and Intemperance of all ſorts. O how unſeaſonable is ſenſual Mirth and Jollity at ſuch a Time as this? See *Ezek.* 21. 10. *Son of Man, Prophecy and ſay, A Sword, a Sword is ſharpned, alſo fourbiſhed; It is ſharpned to make a ſore Slaughter.* And what of that? Obſerve what follows. *Should we then make Mirth?* Alas, how may we cry out, A Sword, a Sword, that hath already made a ſore Slaughter, and what further Slaughter it will make, God alone doth know. Well therefore may it be ſaid to us, *And ſhould we now make Mirth?* What manner of Queſtion is this, think we? It is *Queſtio negantis, indignantis, abominantis*: I cannot ſufficiently in few words expreſs that pregnancy of ſence and matter therein contained, what it imports as to the thing it ſelf Queſtioned, and as to the affection, or affections imaginable in him, who puts the Queſtion. Let it ſuffice briefly to ſay, That it is a Queſtion not otherwiſe to be Anſwered, than divers others of the like Importance in Scripture, I mean, with thoſe words of Abomination uſual in both the Sacred Languages, [God forbid] O God forbid, God forbid all ſuch abominable, and unreaſonable practices. What an high

high Provocation this is, ſee by what God threatens thereupon, *Eſay* 22. 14. *Surely this Iniquity ſhall not be purged from you till ye dye.* When then? Never, never: for that's the meaning of the Phraſe [*Not till ye dye.*] that is, never. See the like Phraſe and Sence, 2 *Sam.* 6. *laſt.* Being about to conclude this Section, I do inſtantly mind one thing, which I had almoſt forgot, and that is, to declare to you the more full importance of that Queſtion, *Should ye then make Mirth?* Be it therefore known to you, that the Anſwer thereunto muſt in all Reaſon be Affirmative, as well as Negative; my meaning is (and this is the meaning of the Prophet,) *viz.* That we ſhould not onely not make Mirth, but (*Cujus eſt Contrarium*) we ſhould mourn and humble our ſelves, to which therefore I ſhall exhort you in the words of St. *James*, Chap. 4. 9, 10. *Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep, let your Laughter be turned into mourning, and your Joy into heavineſs; Humble your ſelves in the ſight of the Lord.* I add, ſaying, In the ſight and ſenſe of his Judgments by no means to be ſlighted, or deſpiſed; and the rather, becauſe to deſpiſe Them, is conſtructively to deſpiſe God himſelf; yea, with a Witneſs, and in a very high degree: For if to deſpiſe the bare Word, and Commandment of God (a Phraſe more than once uſed in this 26 Chap. of *Leviticus*, v. 15.

43.) be by Interpretation, a deſpiſing of God himſelf (*1 Sam.* 2. 30.) how much more is the deſpiſing of his Afflicting Hand of the like conſtruction? God therein may be ſaid to be doubly deſpiſed, *viz.* In that we regard neither his Word, nor his Rod, nor what he ſpeaks to us by the one, or by the other.

SECT. XXXV.

3. A Third Grand Impediment to our Reformation by theſe things, and a cauſe of our Incorrigibleneſs, is our inſenſibleneſs of the true Cauſe, or Cauſes; I mean, the meritorious Cauſes of Gods Judgments, our not acknowledging them, and not laying them to Heart accordingly. What the cauſe of all puniſhment is, we have already heard from this Text it ſelf, and in the Second Branch of the Uſe of Information, *viz.* Sin. It is of the very formal Nature of puniſhment, that it be for ſin. *Omnis pœna eſt peccati pœna.* It is the true definition of puniſhment, yea, Chaſtiſement: That it is *Malum Phyſicum*, or *malum Paſſionis propter malum morale*, or *Actionis*; ſo that Suffering cannot be ſtyled either Chaſtiſement, or Puniſhment, unleſs it be for ſin,

Mic.

Mic. 1. 5. *For the Transgression of* Jacob *is all this, and for the sins of the House of* Israel. *Esay* 42. 24. *Who gave* Jacob *for a spoyl, and* Israel *to the Robbers? Did not the Lord, he, against whom we have sinned?* Jer. 5. 25. *Your Iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have with-holden good things from you.* Let the punishment be what it will (privative, or positive, the with-holding of good things from us, or the inflicting of evil things upon us) sin undoubtedly is the cause thereof. Whatever pressures, or punishments a sinner lyes under, those words of the Prophet *Jeremy*, (Chap. 4. 18. *This is thy wickedness*) may be engraven upon it. But this sinners oft-times will not see and acknowledge, at least, not lay it to Heart. Sometimes they will justifie themselves, saying, They are Innocent, as did *Judah*, Jer. 2. 35. And in stead of Complaining of themselves, they will Complain of God, saying with them in *Ezekiel*, Chap. 18. 25. *The way of the Lord is not equal.* Sinners must be shewed their sinners, before they will see them, whence that Charge of God to the Prophet *Esay*, Chap. 58. 1. *Cry aloud, and spare not, lift up thy voyce like a Trumpet; Shew my People their Transgressions* --- And the like his Charge to the Prophet *Ezekiel*, Chap. 10. 2. *Son of Man, cause* Jerusalem *to know her abominations.* One would think, that abominable

wickedneſs (abominations) could not be unknown to ſinners, and that ſinners could not but of themſelves know them ſufficiently, as to intuition, or an intuitive knowledge: But it ſeems, it was not ſo, and therefore God bids his Prophet Cauſe them to know their abominations. Yea, (which is ſtill worſe) many ſinners, though they are under ſore Afflictions, and puniſhed ſeven times more than formerly, yet are unwilling to know their ſins, eſpecially their abominations, (*i. e.*) their more hainous ſins: Yea, they will be Angry; yea, ſome will be little leſs than mad, or madded with him, or them, who will be ſo plain with them, and faithful to them, as to ſalute them with ſuch Language, as *Nathan* did *David*, ſaying, *Tues Homo*, Thou art the Offender, Thou art the Drunkard, Whore-monger, Lyar, Swearer, Worldling, *&c.* Or, if ſinners are ſenſible of their ſins as the Cauſes of their Sufferings, yet how few do lay them to heart? Though they mourn, perhaps, for their Sufferings, yet how few in that Caſe do mourn for their ſins? This Godly ſorrow is that, for want of which the Prophet *Jeremy* Complains, ſaying, Chap. 5. 3. *Thou haſt ſtricken them, but they have not grieved.* Now, ſo long as ſinners are inſenſible of their ſins as the Cauſes of their ſufferings, and do not lay them to Heart, what Reformation can be expected?

Exhort

Exhort such a sinner to Reform, and what will his Answer be, but like that of the People, being exhorted in a like Case by Gods Prophets to return, (they saying, *wherein shall we return?* Mal. 3. 7.) What should we Reform? Or, wherein should we be Reformed?

For a Remedy then against the said Impediment to our Reformation, and as a fit and proper means conducing thereunto, I will exhort to these three things.

1. To search after those sins, which are the Causes of our punishments.

2. To confess them.

3. To lay them to Heart, and to be humbled in the sight of God for them.

1. Let us be sollicitous to know and find out what special sin, or sins are the Causes of Gods punishing us with such severity. Thus sollicitous was *David* in a like Case, who being under a sore Judgment of a three Years Famine, is said to have enquired of the Lord, 2 *Sam.* 21. 1. And of what, or to what purpose that his enquiry was, doth appear by the Lords Answer immediately specified, [*It is for Saul, and for his Bloody House, because he slew the* Gibeonites.] The Light of Nature did Instruct the Heathens thus to do, as appears by the Mariners, in *Jonah*, thus saying every one to his fellow, Chap. 1. 7. *Come, & let us cast Lots, that we may know for whose*

Cause this evil is upon us. I shall exhort you then in the words, wherewith the Church under her lamentable sufferings is brought in, exciting one another hereunto, *Lam.* 3 40. *Let us search and try our ways*: And in the words of *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 14. 38. *Know and see, where in the sin hath been this day.* Only as touching this search, and examination of the Matter, let it be such as was said of our Reformation, Let it be an Orderly search, (*i. e.*) Let it begin at home, and then proceed forwards to others.

1. Then be exhorted to begin with your selves. Examine your selves, prove your selves, whether there is not that in you, and hath been done by you, which hath caused God so heavily to punish us. Flatter not your selves in your own Conceit, that because you are one of the Godly party (as Sects and Sectaries of all sorts do usually appropriate this Title to their own Tribe.) I say, flatter not your self in thinking, that because you are of the Reforming, or Non-Conforming Party (whether Presbyterian, Congregational, Anabaptical, &c.) who stand for a Reformation of our Protestant Reformation, that therefore you are not at all responsible for the Calamities of the Time. O that every one of all Parties would in sober sadness lay their hands upon their own Breasts, saying, in the words

of

of the Prophet *Jeremy*, *What have I done?* Let us never talk and Complain what others have done, till we have expostulated with our selves, saying, *What have I done?* As *Solomon* says, *Prov.* 20. 9. *Who can say, I have made my Heart clean, I am pure from my sin?* In like sort may we make the Challenge, saying, Who can say, that he is pure from the guilt of all the Judgments of God that are upon us? Who can wash his hands, with *Pilate*, and say, He is Innocent as to all that Blood, which of latter Years hath been shed, both by Land and Sea?

2. Search your Houses, as *Jacob* did the Tents of his Wives and Maid Servants, *Gen.* 31. 32. Examine, what *Achans* are there to be found. Have not you alike Cause to suspect concerning some of yours, as *Job* did of his, saying, *Chap.* 1. 5. *It may be my Sons have sinned, and Cursed God in their Hearts.* In searching we do many times over-look things, seeking and searching a great way off, when the things search'd after are nigh at hand, and with less Labour might have been found out.

3. Search and Examine, what are the sins of the Times, the sins of others, of all sorts and Conditions of Men; of Court, City, Country, Nobility, Gentry, Clergy, Laity, &c. God forbid that we should make faults where

there are none; or to make such things to be Crimes, which are no Crimes. This were to Calumniate and Libell, a fault too too Common with Dissenters, both in former and latter Times, as if it were no sin to speak wickedly for God, and to talk deceitfully for him, as *Job*, upon such an account doth expostulate with his Friends, *Chap.* 13. 7. saying farther, (*v.* 9. as the *Geneva* Translation Readeth) *Will ye make a lye for God, as one lyeth for a Man?* Is a lye therefore no lye, because it is for God, being told out of blind Zeal for God and his Cause? But alas, what need we to play the Libellers, in slandring, and making faults where there are none? Or Satyrists in making Mountains of Mole-hills, as many misled People do, the more have their Leaders to Answer for, who have Corrupted and misled them. The Lord knows, and even upon a little impartial search we cannot but know real faults, grievous Crimes, wonderful and horrible wickednesses, hainous abominations in all sorts of Men and Women among us, more than enough to fill our Hearts with sorrow, and our Faces with shame and confusion. Being to search for the sins of these sinful Times as the Causes of our Sufferings, we may at the instant of our setting out upon such a work, say, as *Leah* did upon the Birth of her Hand-maids Son (the calling him *Gad*) *Behold, A Troop cometh.*

Except

Except we ſhut our Eyes, we cannot but ſee the manifo'd Evils, and great Provocations of the Times wherein we Live; *And woe be to them that do ſow Pillows under all Arm-holes, ſaying Peace, when there is no Peace.*

2. Having upon ſearch (more or leſs) found out our ſins, and the ſins of others to be the Cauſes of Gods Judgments, let us in ſuch ſort, or in that Nature acknowledge and confeſs them before God and Men, ſaying, with the Church, *Lam.* 5. 16. *Woe unto us that we have ſinned.* Let every one confeſs of himſelf, and for himſelf, as did *Jonah*, ſaying (*Chap.* 1. 12. *I know, that for my ſake this great Tempeſt is upon you.*) I know, that for my ſake as well as the ſake of others, this great Tempeſt of Divine wrath is upon us, Church and State.

2. As for our ſelves and Families, let us confeſs, with *Nehemiah*, (Chap. 1. 6. *Both I and my Fathers Houſe have ſinned.*) Both I and my Houſe, I and my Fathers Houſe have ſinned.

3. As for our ſelves and others of all ſorts, let us confeſs, with the Prophet *Daniel*, Chap. 9. both concerning the whole Nation Collectively and diſtributively, as we find him acknowledging, *v.* 11. *Yea, all* Iſrael *have Tranſgreſſed thy Law, even by departing, that they might not Obey thy Voyce, therefore the Curſe*

is poured upon us, &c. And v. 5, 6. *We have ſinned, and have Committed Iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have Rebelled, even by departing from thy Precepts, and from thy Judgments; Neither have we hearkened unto thy Servants the Prophets, which ſpake in thy Name to our Kings, our Princes, and our Fathers, and to all the People of the Land.* Read alſo v. 7, 8. *O Lord, to us belongeth Confuſion of Face, to our Kings, to our Princes, and to our Fathers*, &c. Let it be Obſerved touching this Confeſſion of *Daniel*, with other the like in Scripture.

1. That he doth Confeſs, not onely the ſin of the preſent Times, or ſin of later Times Committed, but alſo the ſins of former Times, and long ſince Committed, as the Cauſes of Gods Judgments.

2. He doth aggravate their ſins in his Confeſſion, as they were aggravated in the Commiſſion.

3. He doth not exclude the ſins of any ſort of Perſons, as having no hand in bringing Gods wrath upon the Nation; which I do rather intimate, becauſe it may be uſeful to Obſerve, that the miſcarriages of Pious Perſons, and Princes may provoke God to bring ſore evils upon a Nation, as we find in the Inſtances of *David* and *Hezekiah*, upon Record in 2 *Sam.* 29. and 2 *Chron.* 21. *begin.* and 2. 32. 25.

which

which we may peruſe at Leiſure.

Let me then reſume my Exhortation, and beſpeak you in the words of *Joſhua* to *Achan*, (Chap. 7. 19. *My Son*, &c.) My Brethren, *Give, I pray you, Glory to the Lord God of* Iſrael, *and make Confeſſion to him.* This indeed is to glorifie God, and that more ways than one. In ſpecial, it is to juſtifie God, which is one notable way of Glorifying God, ſtyled therefore a Confeſſing of Gods Name, 1 *Kings* 8. 33. (*i. e.*) An acknowledging of his Juſtice to the Glory of his great Name, as in *Nehem.* 9. 33. Confeſs we then, to our own ſhame, and to Gods Glory, as doth the Prophet *Eſay*, ſaying, Chap. 64. 6. *We all are as an unclean thing, and all our Righteouſneſſes are as filthy Rags, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our Iniquities, as the Wind, have taken us away.* It is not meerly the Wind, but our Iniquities as the Wind, and in the Wind, that doth damnifie us both by Land and Sea.

3. Our ſins being found out, and acknowledged, let us humble our ſelves in the ſight of God for them. All Confeſſion of ſin ſhould proceed from Contrition for it, *Lev.* 26. 40. with 41. *If they ſhall confeſs their Iniquity*--- v. 40. *if then their Uncircumciſed Hearts be humbled*--- v. 41. Confeſſion without Contrition, is like a Lame Sacrifice, (*i. e.*) ſuch as God will not accept, *Pſal.* 51. 17. *It is a bro-*

ken

ken and and contrite heart which God will not deſpiſe. This is that Duty, which I mean, true remorſe and Humiliation for ſin is that Duty, which God by his puniſhments doth call for from ſinners. See *Joel* 2. 12, 13. *Rent your Hearts and not your Garments*, &c. *Eſay* 22. 12. *In that Day did the Lord God of Hoſts call for weeping and*, &c. God doth call for this Duty from all ſorts and conditions of Men, even from the loweſt to the higheſt, Royalty it ſelf not excepted: For, *Say to the King, and to the Queen, Humble your ſelves*, Jer. 13. 18. is the Lords Commiſſion to the Prophet *Jeremy*. Let us all then humble our ſelves for our ſins as the Cauſe of our Sufferings, and let it be in the firſt place, for our own ſins. Our ſorrow ſhould begin and proceed in that Order as did our ſearch. Let us, being ſenſible of the Plagues of our own Hearts and Houſes, I mean, of the ſins of our own Perſons and Families (for *Solomon* ſtyles ſin by the name of Plague, 1 *Kings* 8. 38.) Bemoan, and lay them to Heart, in the firſt place; for he or ſhe are no better than Hypocrites, who pretending to mourn for the ſins of the Times, are not affected with ſorrow for their own. Next, let us, with *Lot*, be grieved for the ſins of thoſe,

The Nobility hath no Priviledge, nor hath the Crown any Prerogative in this Caſe (humbly be it ſpoken.)

those, among whom we Live; and indeed that Christian, who grieves truly for his own sins, cannot but grieve proportionably for the sin of others. Let Holy *David* be a Pattern to us in both. How he did lay to heart his own sin, doth appear by what he says in one of his seven penitential Psalms (to name no other) *Psal.* 38. 18. *I will declare mine Iniquity to the Lord, I will be sorry for my sin.* And how he did lay to heart the sins of others, doth appear by his saying, *Psal.* 119. 158. *I beheld the Transgressours, and was grieved.* And how, or how much was he grieved? *Answ.* So as to utter it by his Tears; For, says he, *v.* 136. *Rivers of Waters run down mine eyes, because Men keep not thy Law.* Sin indeed is it, I mean, our own sins, and the sins of others, that is the fittest Object of sorrow, it being our Duty to lay to Heart our sins much more than our sufferings. This indeed is that which St. *Paul* styles εἰς τὸν Θεὸν μετάνοια, *Repentance towards God*, Acts 20. 21. And κατὰ Θεὸν λύπη 2 *Cor.* 7. 9. A sorrow according to God, or Godly sorrow; sorrow meerly upon the account of Suffering, being τοῦ κόσμου The sorrow of the World, or a Worldlings sorrow, who have nothing of God, or Godliness in them: Yea, I may say, that this is but brutish sorrow; for, Bears and Bulls, Owls and Dragons, will, in their Kind, lament upon such a score. See the

the Expreſſions, or Compariſons, *Eſay* 59. 11. *We roar like Bears, and mourn ſore like Doves.* Eſay 51. 20. *Thy Sons are as a Wild Bull in a Net, full of the Fury of the Lord.* Mic. 1. 8. *I will make a wailing like the Dragons, and mourning as the Owls.* Let us then weep and mourn, not at that rate, as do Doves and Dragons, as do Owls and Bears, (*i. e.*) for our Sufferings ſo much as for our ſins; and the rather, becauſe without this mourning for ſin, as well (to ſpeak the leaſt) as for the puniſhment of ſin, no Reformation of ſin can be expected. I grant indeed, that the ſaid godly ſorrow for ſin may be ſaid, in reſpect of Internal Reformation, or Renovation to be *Gradus in Re*, an Ingredient, or Integral part thereof, but in reſpect of External Reformation (that of our outward Man, or Actions, under which Conſideration I have Exhorted to it) I look upon it as *Gradus ad Rem*, as a means conducing to it, and without which, this kind of External Reformation is never like, or poſſible to be effected. See *Jer.* 5. 3. *Thou haſt ſmitten them,* ſaith the Prophet, in his Complaint to God, *but they have not grieved* (i. e.) for their ſins eſpecially. Now, what follows thereupon? *Anſw. They refuſed to receive Correction: They refuſed to return.* (i. e.) They would not be Reformed by theſe things. See *Ezek.* 18. 30. *Repent, and turn*

your

your ſelves from all your Tranſgreſſions: Firſt, Repent For, then Turn From all your Tranſgreſſions: No Repenting for them, no Reforming them, or turning from them. For ſinners to ſee, and acknowledge, and to lament their ſins as the Cauſes of all Gods Judgments, is, to Accept of the puniſhment of their Iniquities, as is the Expreſſion of *Moſes* in this Chapter, *v.* 41. And for that Cauſe, I ſhall not onely exhort you, in the words of St. *James* (*Chap.* 4. 9. *Be Afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your Joy into heavineſs*) but let your mourning alſo be turned into mourning, and your heavineſs into heavineſs: I mean, Let our mourning and heavineſs for our ſufferings be turned into mourning and heavineſs for our ſins.

SECT. XXXVI.

4. A Fourth main Impediment to Reformation, is Wilfulneſs, or the Obſtinacy of our Wills. The Truth of this I have at large demonſtrated in the ſixth Branch of the Uſe of Information, to which for proof I ſhall referr you, ſo that I have no more now to do in

in this place, than according to the Direction in hand to Admoniſh you of this your wilfulneſs, and endeavour to incline you unto a contrary bent, or to bend your Wills as we do things crooked, a contrary way.

1. Labour to be ſenſible, that this is the very cauſe of your not being Reformed hitherto, & & acknowledge it, not excuſing the Obſtinacy, perverſeneſs of your Wills, or your wilful perſiſting in ſin, ſaying, I had a great mind and will to the contrary, to be better, and to Reform my Old courſe of Life, to leave my old haunts, *&c.* Confeſs, as the Truth is, That you have ſet at nought Gods Counſel, and would none of his Reproof, *Prov.* 1. 25. Complain of your ſelf, as Chriſt did of *Jeruſalem*, ſaying, (*Mat.* 23. 37. *O* Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, *thou that Killeſt the Prophets, How often would I,* &c. *and ye would not.*) In like ſort do you confeſs your ſin, and bemoan your ſelves, ſaying, O my Soul, thou that haſt quenched the Spirit, and reſiſted the Holy Ghoſt, how often would thy Saviour have gathered thee as an Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, and Thou Would'ſt not?

2. As for the Future, be Admoniſhed to take heed of Wilfulneſs, of being wedded to your own Wills in Competition with, or in Oppoſition to the Will of God. This is that, which Scrip-

Scripture ſtyles ſtiff-neckedneſs, or to have a Neck as an Iron Sinew, which by Interpretation is to have an Obſtinate Will, *Eſay* 48. 4. *I knew*, ſaith God to *Judah*, *that thou art obſtinate*, *and thy Neck is as an Iron Sinew*; (and obſerve what follows) *and thy brow braſs*. If our Necks do once come to be an Iron Sinew, our brows will ſoon become as Braſs. A ſtiff Neck, and a brazen Face will not be long aſunder; we do uſually find them coupled together. Be then Admoniſhed in the words of *Hezekiah* to his People, 2 *Chron.* 30. 8. *Be not ye ſtiff-necked as your Fathers were, but yield your ſelves unto the Lord.* This wilfulneſs is both ſin, and the puniſhment of ſin. See *Pſal.* 81. 11, 12. *But my People would not hearken unto my Voyce*, *and* Iſrael *would none of me.* (Mark the words ingeminated, *Would not*, *Would not*, and mark then what follows) *So I gave them up to their own Hearts Luſts.* As Wilfulneſs was their ſin, ſo being given up to their wills, was their puniſhment. And what manner of puniſhment was this? or what was the Conſequence of it? Mark the following words. *And they walked in their own Counſels.* And indeed what Rationally can be expected, but that he, that is given up of God to his own Will, ſhould walk after it? Such a ſelf-will'd ſinner, we may be ſure, ſhall never want woe, as the Proverb hath it. O

pray to God to give you a ſelf-denying will, to take away this ſelf-will, this ſtiff will of yours, and to give you a plyant and complying will (to ſpeak in alluſion to that expreſſion of God himſelf, by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, Chap. 36. 26.) A new Heart, a new Spirit, a new Will, as doth the *Pſalmiſt*, ſaying, *Pſal.* 51. 10. *Create in me a clean Heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me.* Pray to God both to incline, and to diſ-incline your wills, as doth *David*, ſaying, *Pſal.* 119. 36. *Incline my Heart unto thy Teſtimonies, and not to Coveteouſneſs.* And *Pſal.* 141. 4. *Incline not my Heart to any evil thing*, (i. e.) Diſ-incline my Heart from every evil thing, *not to practiſe wicked works with Men that work Iniquity, and let me not eat of their Dainties.* The rather it concerns us to do it, becauſe till this Impediment of wilful ſtubbornneſs, or ſtubborn wilfulneſs be taken out of the way, a ſinner can never be Reformed, his [will not] being his [cannot] as was afore ſaid and proved. *If you be Willing and Obedient*, ſaith the Prophet *Eſay*, Chap. 1. 19. We muſt be firſt VVilling, then Obedient. God works in us, firſt, the τὸ θέλειν and then the τὸ ἐνεργεῖν, firſt, to VVill, and then to Do. And therefore,

3. For a more effectual removing of this Impediment out of the way of a ſinners Reformation, and for the contrary facilitating there-

thereof; let ſinners be exhorted to ſet up an Oppoſite VVill, I mean, a fixed VVill, and firm Reſolution, that by the Grace of God they will Reform, they will be Reformed. As St. *Paul* ſaid of Zeal, which indeed ſeems to be an intenſe VVill, or intenſiveneſs of VVill, (*Gal.* 4.18. *It is good* ζηλοῦσθαι *to be zealouſly always in a good thing.*) In like ſort may it be well ſaid, It is good, it is very good to be wilful and reſolute, to be always ſo ἐν καλῷ in a good Matter, the thing Reformation. Such a firm and reſolute VVill had St. *Paul*, that would not bow, could not be bowed by any perſwaſions, or diſſwaſions, he ſaying to his well-wiſhing Friends (whoſe Oratory is uſually moſt potent and prevalent) *Acts* 21. 13. *What mean ye to weep, and to break my Heart? I am ready, not onely to be bound, but alſo to dye at* Jeruſalem *for the Name of the Lord* Jeſus; implying, that albeit they broke his Heart, they ſhould never break his purpoſe by their diſſwaſions; the Heart of his purpoſe, or purpoſe of his Heart. I ſhall exhort you then, that with the like purpoſe of Heart, and bent of

Old Oaths having been ſo long in Faſhion, it's time now, that they were out of Faſhion; let all ſwearers therefore, but more eſpecially Gentlemen-ſwearers, take up ſome new kind of Oath: This of *David*, with Reſpect whereunto I ſay, Let every Man Swear in the Name of God.

VVill you would Reſolve upon a Reformation. Imitate *David*, *I have ſaid*, ſays he, *Pſal.* 119. 57. *that I would keep thy Word.* Said? Yea, ſworn: For ſo he ſays, *v.* 106. *I have ſworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy Righteous Judgments.* Hear me, O ye Swearers, here is a new Oath for you, O ye God Damn-me's! As the Prophet *Jeremy* ſays (Chap. 9. 24. *He that Glorieth, let him Glory in this, that he underſtandeth and knows God.*) In like ſort ſhall I ſay (and with that ſaying conclude this Section) He that ſweareth, let him ſwear that which *David* did, ſwears this, *viz.* That by Gods helping Grace (whatſoever formerly he hath done, yet for the future) he will keep Gods Righteous Judgments; and what he hath ſworn, let him perform. And to this end I ſhall pray much, what in the words of that Prayer of *David's*, 1 *Chron.* 29. 18. *O Lord God of* Abraham, Iſaac, *and of* Iſrael; fill the mouths of thy People with ſuch kind of breath, with ſuch Oaths (as afore-ſaid) and keep ſuch a fixedneſs of VVill, and ſtedfaſt purpoſes in the Heart of thy People for ever, and Eſtabliſh their Hearts unto thee.

SECT.

SECT. XXXVII.

5. A Fifth Impediment to be removed out of the way of Reformation, is Carnal Truſt and Confidence. And by this I mean, a truſting to two things.

1. External Helps, and Helpers.

2. External Priviledges, and certain External Performances.

1. I will begin with the latter, *viz.* Vain Confidence in Church-Priviledges, and External Performances. This was the ſin of the Jews, of which we read in many Scriptures; They called themſelves of the Holy City, and did thereupon ſtay themſelves upon the God of *Iſrael*, *Eſay* 48.2. ſaying, *Is not the Lord amongſt us?* They concluded thereupon, ſaying, *None evil can come upon us*, Mic. 3. 11. Being called Jews, they did reſt in the Law, and made their boaſt of God, *Rom.* 2. 17. *We be* Abraham's *Seed*, ſay they, *John* 8. 33. And again, *Abraham is our Father*, ſay they, v. 39. Thereupon they truſted to Inherit the Bleſſing of *Abraham*. But the Prophet *Jeremy* tells them, Theſe were but lying words, *Jer.* 7. 4. *Behold, ye truſt in lying Words, ſaying, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord.* Again, They truſted to the Performance of certain External Services, their frequenting

the Temple and Synagogue-Worſhip, their Sacrificing the Blood of Bulls and Goats, outſide-Faſting, *&c.* And to theſe things they truſted, as appears by *Eſay* 58. 3. *Wherefore have we Faſted, ſay they? Wherefore have we Afflicted our Soul,* &c. But it appears by that Chapter, how vain that their Confidence was, as well by what they ſaid, as by what God ſaid of that their Service; they ſay as Men diſappointed in their Expectation, that God would not afford them or their Services a good look, or take any Notice of them (*Wherefore have we faſted, and thou ſeeſt not? Wherefore* ----) And it appears by what God ſays, *v.* 5. *Is it ſuch a Faſt that I have choſen? A Day for a Man to afflict his Soul? Is it to bow down his Head like a Bulruſh* ---- See how vain this Confidence of theirs was, by what we find written more at large in *Eſay* 1. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. *To what purpoſe is the multitude of your Sacrifices of me, ſaith the Lord* ------ Cui bono?

Let us then be admoniſhed of this kind of carnal Truſt. What, though we are Chriſtians Baptized into the Faith of Chriſt, will this ſecure us from Ruine here, or from Hell hereafter? Surely our Baptiſm will no more profit a Chriſtian, than Circumciſion did a Jew; of which, ſee what the Apoſtle ſays, *Rom.* 2. 25. *Circumciſion verily profiteth, if thou keep the Law, but*

if

if thou be a breaker of the Law, thy Circumcision is made uncircumcision. How may it be said to a Christian, *Mutato nomine de te narratur* ---- Change but the Names of Circumcision and Jew into that of Christian and Baptism, and the self-same saying we may be sure is verified of us. Read the Verses following, which are of great Use, and worthy of all remembrance, whereby it will appear, that an honest Heathen is much to be preferred to a wicked Christian. What though we are Sons of the Protestant Church, the truly Ancient and Catholick Church? We may be Children of the Devil for all that, as our Saviour told them who pretended themselves to be as good as we, saying, *John* 8. 44. *Ye are of your Father the Devil*; and if the same can be prov'd against us, as was charg'd upon them, *viz. That we do the Lusts, the works of the Devil,* it's a thing past denyal that we are the Devils Children.

Again, Let us be Admonished not to trust to our Performance, yea, constant Performance of External Duties, be it the Observation of a Solemn Fast (Anniversary and standing, or else Occasional;) for to our weekly coming to Church, hearing daily Prayers Read Morning and Evening. I say, trust not to these [*Ceteris imparibus*] so long as your Lives are wicked, and you Live in a constant neglect of

the great things of Gods Law. See *Mat.* 7. 21, 22, 23. It is a vain thing to cry Lord, Lord, and to alledge what good Ministers we have heard, and how many times we have been partakers at the Lords Table, if in the mean while we have been workers of Iniquity. It is a vain thing for such to scrape Acquaintance with Christ, who hath told them their doom before hand, and what they are therefore to trust unto, *viz.* A commanded departure from him, with a *non novi vos.*

2. There is another kind of Carnal Confidence, which is a great Impediment to Reformation by the Judgments of God upon us, *viz.* A confiding to external help and helps, whether our own strength, or the strength of our Confederates. This was another sin of the Jews, frequently charged upon them by the Prophets. See *Hos.* 5. 13. *When* Ephraim *saw his sickness, and* Judah *saw his wound, then went* Ephraim *to the* Assyrian, *and sent to King* Jareb, *Hos.* 7. 11. *They call to* Egypt, *they go to* Assyria: And Chap. 8. 9. *They are gone up to* Assyria. And sometimes it was their sin to trust to their own single strength, this being the sin of King *Uzziah*, 2 *Chron.* 26. 15. And this (it is very much to be doubted) hath been our sin in this Nation, and for which among other our sins we have Suffered in these latter times. O what boasting and bragging

hath

hath been heard amongst us, especially since we have had Forreign Assistance? How many Battels have we won before one was fought? How many times have our Enemies been utterly vanquished, before, or as soon as they were in sight? And verily, if Vapouring and Boasting, if Cursing and Swearing, and Drinking to the Confusion of our Enemies, would have done the deed, our Enemies had been all vanquished and confounded long since. If this Carnal Confidence hath been our sin (for I did ever doubt and much fear it) I heartily desire these three things, *viz.*

1. That we may see it; and
2. See it both in the sinfulness; and
3. In the Fruits of it.

1. My first desire is, That God would give us to see that our sin, that he would make us sensible of it, and that owning it, we may be humbled in his sight for it. I fear it will not be well with us till it come to this. Doth it not become a People, when God frowns upon them, & refuseth to go forth with their Armies (as is the Complaint of the Church, *Psal.* 60. 10.) To pray to God, with *Job*, saying, *Chap.* 10. 2. *Do not condemn us, shew us wherefore thou contendest with us.*

2. My desire is, that we may not onely see it, and own it; I mean, see it superficially, and own it meerly as a sin of its kind, but also that

that we may see it in its proper colours, see it in its peculiar sinfulness, and accordingly own it, and be humbled for it, confessing, with *David*, (somewhat in a like Case) 2 *Sam.*24.10. Not onely that we have sinned, but that we have sinned (*Meodh, Valde*) Greatly; and we have done *valde Stultè*, play'd the Fools egregiously: And as that Holy Man confesseth farther, *v.* 17. So let us, saying, We have sinned, and we have done wickedly. Well doth it become us to make such an acknowledgment: For Carnal Confidence, whether in our own strength, or in our Confederacies, is a most wicked sin. It is easily Dmonstrable to be such, and it might be to good purpose to insist somewhat more copiously (not so much to convince us, as to affect us) in the Demonstration thereof. But (lest I seem over-tedious) let it suffice to say, That it doth Argue great forgetfulness of God, a great strangeness to him, and an alienation from him; it self is a forgetting of God, and so to be denominated: It is a kind of Idolatry and Adultery, that which we call Spiritual Adultery and Idolatry, *viz.* An Idolizing of the Creature, a putting God out of place, a putting him beside his Throne (wherein he sits as Supreme Lord, Governour and Disposer of all) and setting up our selves in his stead. At once it is an extreme forgetting both of the Creator and the Creature;

ture; both of God and our ſelves. All which may be proved in Reaſon, and by apt Scriptures. I will onely ſay, That Carnal Confidence is an heart-departure from the Living God, and I will alledge onely that one Scripture for the Proof of it, *Jer.* 17. 5. *Curſed be the Man that truſteth in Man, and maketh Fleſh his Arm, and whoſe Heart departeth from the Lord.* Obſerve the Implication, or Complication (ſhould I ſay?) We cannot make fleſh our Arm without a departure (more or leſs) in heart from the Lord.

3. My deſire is, That we may ſee it in the Fruits of it. It is indeed my deſire, and God forbid, but that it ſhould be my deſire, that in one ſence we may never ſee this ſin in the Fruits of it, (*i. e.*) by Experiencing the Fruits of it in ſuch ſort as we have already done, and as Gods People of Old have done to their woe, and according to the tenour of his Threatnings for this very ſin. But that we may no longer ſee the Fruits of it in this ſence, experimentally ſee it, let us take notice of the miſchievous Fruits thereof, as we find them threatned and Recorded in Scripture. Carnal confidence being ſo wicked a ſin, what can be expected but Fruit proportionably miſchievous? *For, do Men gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thiſtles?* The ſin is a curſed ſin (*Curſed is the Man that truſteth in Man*, &c.) And what

what can the Fruit thereof be, but curſed Fruit? The ſin is in a more peculiar reſpect in Heart and Soul a departing from the Lord; and what can the miſchievous Fruit thereof be leſs than this, *viz.* Gods departing from us, according to the tenour of his threatning? 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. *If ye forſake him, he will forſake you.* See how God threatned this ſin in *Eſay* 30. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. and 31. 1, 2, 3. Thoſe Scriptures are very pregnant for the purpoſe in hand, and therefore let them be read line by line, and well conſidered. How ſorely did Gods People of Old ſmart for this ſin? What diſ-appointments did they ſuffer upon this account? Their Carnal dependance upon their Confederacies is ſtyled a feeding upon Wind, and following after the Eaſt-wind, an increaſing of Lyes and Deſolation, *Hoſ.* 12. 1. See what is Recorded of *Uzziah*, 2 *Chron.* 26. 16. *When he was ſtrong, his Heart was lifted up,* (*i. e.*) In Confidence of his own ſtrength. And what was the Fruit that came of it? *Anſw.* Deſtruction; *His Heart*, ſaith the Story, *was lifted up To his Deſtruction.* As Jezebel ſaid to Jehu (*Had* Zimri *Peace who ſlew his Maſter?*) In like ſort do I ſay, Had *Ahaz* any Advantage for Truſting to the King of *Aſſyria* for help? No, ſays the ſtory, he helped him not. And have Godly Princes ſped better in this Carnal curſed Confidence, than the Ungodly?

godly? I make this ſuppoſition, becauſe this was the ſin, not onely of wicked *Ahaz*, but alſo of Godly *Aſa*: And how did *Aſa* ſpeed? or what did he get by it? See the ſtory at large Recorded, 2 *Chron.* 16. In ſhort, he loſt by it; and whereas he thought he had Acted the part of a Polititian, God tells him, and the event proved it, *He had done Fooliſhly*, v. 9. So that State-Policy proves not always to be true wiſdom; ſo much cauſe have we to pray to God to Direct, and Proſper the Counſels, even of Pious Princes. Briefly, the miſchievous Fruit of Carnal Confidence, is, That it maketh helps no helps, and helpers no helpers; yea, it obſtructs the help of God, and of helpers it makes hinderers, and turns ſtrength into weakneſs. And the miſchievous Fruit of it yet farther, is (which was the Occaſion of my mentioning it from the beginning,) That it is a great Impediment to the Reformation of a ſinful People; for while they depend upon their own ſtrength, and the ſtrength of their Confederates for ſecurity, they are never like to take Gods way for the ſecuring of themſelves, (*i. e.*) to Reform their ſins, which have brought them into ſtraits, and ſo to come under Divine Protection. While the Prodi- could make any ſhift, he never minded a return to his Father. For a Remedy then in this caſe, be Admoniſhed to take heed of the ſaid ſin, for which

which Gods People of Old have paid ſo dearly. I ſhall admoniſh and exhort you in the words of Scripture, both whom to truſt, and whom to diſtruſt, *Eſay* 2. 22. *Ceaſe ye from Man, whoſe breath is in his Noſtrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Pſal. 146. 3. *Put not your truſt in Princes, nor in any Child of Man, in whom there is no help; his Breath goeth forth* --- Pſal. 118. 8, 9. *It is better to truſt in the Lord, than to put Confidence in Man: It is better to truſt in the Lord, than to put Confidence in Princes. In this kind of quiet Truſt and Confidence will our ſtrength be,* Eſay 30. 15. *Happy is he, who hath the God of* Jacob *for his help, and whoſe hope is in the Lord his God,* Pſal. 146. 5. *Wherefore truſt ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord* Jehovah *is everlaſting ſtrength,* Eſay 26. 4.

SECT. XXXVIII.

6. A Sixth Impediment to Reformation, and a grand cauſe of Incorrigibleneſs, is Infidelity and Atheiſm, when ſinners will not believe the Threatnings of God in Scripture againſt ſin and ſinners, when as it is ſaid of the wicked (*Pſal.* 58. 5. They being there compared

pared to *the deaf Adder, that ſtoppeth her ear, not hearkning to the voyce of the Charmer, charme he never ſo wiſely.*) In like ſort I ſay, when ſinners will not believe God threatning them in his Word, though he threaten them never ſo frequently, ſeverely, dreadfully; when, let God ſay what he will, and ſwear what he will, yet they will not believe him. I ſay, let God ſay, and ſwear what he will: For albeit Gods Word is as good as his Oath, yet for our more abundant confirmation, he doth give us, not his Word onely, but his Oath alſo; yea, he ſwears, not onely to his Promiſes, but to his Threatnings alſo, that he will make good theſe, as well as thoſe. See *Dan.* 9. 11. where having juſtified God in that Vengeance which had been inflicted on them, he ſays, *Therefore the Curſe was poured upon them, and the Oath that is written in the Law of* Moſes.

Now, ſuch is the Infidelity of ſinners, that they will not believe the Curſe of God, though with an Oath, threatned to be poured forth upon them; *But at what time they do hear the words of the Oath and Curſe, they will bleſs themſelves in their Heart, ſaying, We ſhall have Peace, though we walk in the Imagination of our own Hearts, adding Drunkenneſs to thirſt,* as appears by that Admonition in *Deut.* 29. 18, 19. And by the Sermons of the Prophets, wherein ſinners are charged with this Infidelity and

and self-flattery, point blank contrary to what they were threatned with. See *Jer.* 5. 12. *They have belyed the Lord, and said, It is not he, neither shall evil come upon us, neither shall we see Sword, nor Famine.* See *Mic.* 3. 11. and *Esay* 28. 15. where the wicked are brought in, saying, *we have a made Covenant with Death, and with Hell are we at an Agreement* ---- And this Infidelity of theirs was a great hinderance to their Reformation; nor rationally could it be expected, that ever they should forsake their sins so long as they did make account to be safe and secure in them. This Infidelity *Moses* doth therefore style a Root, that beareth Gall and VVormwood, *Deut.* 29. 18. It is *Capitale venenum, & mortiferum*, this root is rank Poyson, as the word (*Rosh* in the Original) signifies, it will poyson Man and VVoman, Family and Tribe; (to speak in the words of *Moses* in that place) let me speak the same thing in other words, saying, VVheresoever this Infidelity hath taken Root, it will poyson Court, City, Colledge, Country, Kingdom; it will Poyson Laity and Clergy, Gentry and Commonalty. Till this Root be rooted out, no Reformation is to be expected. VVhere this Root spreads, nothing that is good can grow near it. This Root was it that poysoned our first Parents, as appears by the sad story touching the manner and means of their Apostacy,

Recorded

Recorded in *Gen.* 3. *viz.* Their believing the Promise or suggestion of the Devil, rather than the Threatning of God. If ever then we mean to be Reformed, let this Evil be Remedyed, let this poysonful Root be Eradicated. This sin of Infidelity doth, barely in it self considered, and as abstracted from its Cursed Root, provoke God to punish a People seven times more for their sins. See *Esay* 28. 15. 17. where because of this sin, *v.* 15. God threatens, saying, *v.* 17. *Judgment will I lay to the Line, and Righteousness to the Plummet; and the Hail shall sweep away the refuge of Lies, and the Waters shall over-flow the hiding place.* In that Metaphorical Expression there is an allusion to the Practice of Masons or Carpenters, who when they would do a thing exactly, use to do it by Line and Level; the meaning then is, That God will exquisitely punish such Infidels.

Quest. But are there any such Infidels and Atheists in these Times? Men, or Monsters rather be it said, that do not believe that there is a God, or that the Scriptures are the Word of God?

Answ. Whether there be any one who is absolutely, perfectly, without any intervals, or intermissions an Atheist, I will not dispute, much less determine; it is enough to say,

1. That there is the said bitter Root of In-

fidelity in the Heart of all Men and Women by Nature, as may be Collected as well from that fore-cited Scripture in *Deut.* as from other Scriptures.

2. There be too many who do desire with all their Hearts to be compleat Atheists, perfect Infidels; they would be so, if possibly they could. In this sence that of the *Psalmist*, *Psal.* 14. 1. is an unquestionable Truth. *The Fool hath said in his Heart*, (i. e.) *Voto & desiderio*, in his heart wishes, and desires (in which sence the word Heart is sometimes taken in Scripture, and is used by us in common speech) *there is no God.*

3. That there is a Tribe, I mean, Multitudes in this wicked Age, who do come as near to perfect Infidels and compleat Atheists, as possibly can be, is very much to be feared upon a two-fold account.

1. It is *Vox populi*, it is the common cry of the Country. Every Mans mouth, who is of more acquaintance in the World, especially with great Men, is full of it. And if there be any Truth in that common Proverb (*There is no Smoak without some Fire.*) Fame hath not raised such a smoak without some Fire, some real Truth as to the Matter in hand.

2. It is *Vox Vitæ*, it is the common speech of Mens Practices: For we speak not onely with our Lips, but with our Lives. *The Transgression*

greſſion of the wicked ſaith (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 36. 1.) *within my Heart, that there is no fear of God before his Eyes.* By a proportion of Reaſon it might be ſaid, That there is not the Faith of God, or of the Word of God in the wicked: For that which ſpeaks the want of fear, doth ſpeak the want of Faith. And what though wicked Men ſay, they believe God and his Word? Muſt we believe them therefore (*i. e.*) that they ſay true in ſo ſaying? May not we ſay to them, *Quid verba audiam, cum facta videam?* Muſt we believe the Tranſgreſſour, or not rather his Tranſgreſſions; I mean, what the wicked Tranſgreſſours do ſay in, or with their Lives and Practices, rather than what they ſay with their Tongues and Lips.

4. What Heart-Atheiſts and Infidels Men may be notwithſtanding they enjoy the Scriptures, appears by the cloſe of the Hiſtory, or Parable concerning that Rich Man in *Luke* 16. *lat. Dives* (it ſeems) did not till he was in Hell believe the writings of *Moſes*, nor the Prophets, and he did ſuſpect his Brethren to be as much Infidels as himſelf, otherwiſe he would have thought it needleſs, and would not have deſired, that one from the dead ſhould have been ſent unto them whereby to perſwade them. And it is not to be doubted, but that others in thoſe times were guilty of the ſame ſin. Though *Dives* had (for ought appears)

but five Brethren in the Fleſh, yet as for Brethren in this piece of Spiritual Iniquity [Infidelity] he had hundreds and thouſands; nor is it to be doubted, but that of this ſort of his Infidel Brethren there is a numerous Generation remaining in all places to this day, eſpecially among the *Diveſes*, the Rich and Great Ones of the World, who are as hard of belief of an Heaven, or Hell after this Life, as was *Thomas Didymus* in another point of Chriſtian Faith, and of whom therefore it may be ſaid (how-ever they are not forward to ſay it of themſelves) that except they ſee Hell-fire with their Eyes, and thruſt their Hands into the flames thereof, they will not believe that there is any ſuch place of Torment as Hell, or danger of any ſuch thing, as of that, which in Scripture is called Fire unquenchable, everlaſting fire, and the fire of Hell. But what was *Abraham's* Anſwer to *Dives* his Requeſt touching one to be ſent from the Dead? See *v.* 29. *They have* Moſes *and the Prophets, let them hear them*; and as for his reply to *Dives* his Anſwer. See *v.* 31. *If they hear not* Moſes *and the Prophets, neither will they be perſwaded, though one roſe from the Dead.* This Reply, it ſeems, did ſilence that Rich Man, and put an end to the Diſcourſe, for not a word more is related concerning it. But without all peradventure, that Reply of Father

Abra-

Abraham was, and is enough both to ſilence and to ſatisfie *Dives*, and all other his Brethren in Infidelity: For as the People ſaid (they being Convinced by the Miracles, which they ſaw, *John* 7. 31.) *When Chriſt cometh will he do more Miracles than theſe, which this Man hath done?* In like ſort may it be ſaid, If one ſhould riſe from the Dead, would he, or could he atteſt his Errand, his Meſſage by more, and more uncontroulable Miracles, than *Moſes* and the Prophets did theirs? If ſinners will be perſwaded by any Miracles, why not by the Miracles of *Moſes* and the Prophets? *Hear this, you faithleſs and perverſe Generation, who, except you ſee Signs and Wonders, will not believe*; I mean, new ſigns and wonders by ſome or other newly riſen from the dead. But oh how vain is it for you to expect ſuch Wonders, or to flatter your ſelves in the ſuppoſed Fruit and Iſſue of them? It is vain for you to expect, that God ſhou'd gratifie you in your Infidelity and Tempting of God, by working new wonders upon your demand; and therefore, as our Saviour ſaid to the unbelieving Jews, who were ſtill calling for more Miracles (for that is the meaning of the word σημεῖον. Sign, *Mat.* 12.39.) *There ſhall no ſign be given you, but the Sign of the Prophet* Jonas (meaning thereby not the Sign or Miracle which *Jonas* did, but which himſelf was, in being three Days and

three Nights in the Whales Belly, and then caſt up alive on ſhore.) In like ſort I ſay to you, There ſhall no Sign be given you, no Miracles wrought for you, but ſuch as of Old were wrought by *Moſes* and the Prophets, by Jeſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and by Men Apoſtolique in former Ages.

Status regiminis ponitur pro appoſitione Syntaxis, The Sign of the Prophet *Jonas* (*i. e.*) The Sign *Jonas* the Prophet. And the word [Sign] is there uſed Synechdochically, the general being there put for a particular, for though every Sign be not a Miracle, yet every Miracle is a Sign.

3. It is vain for you to expect that good to be wrought in you, or upon you by new Miracles, that cannot as ſufficiently and effectually be done by Old: For you may believe the Faithful Father, and Father of the Faithful (for ſo is *Abraham* ſtyled, *Gal.* 3. 9. *Rom.* 4. 11. 16.) who hath ſaid of ſuch Infidels as you, How, *that if ye hear not* Moſes *and the Prophets* (to which I add, ſaying, If you hear not Jeſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles, who all of them came in Demonſtration of the Spirit, and of Power) *neither will ye be perſwaded, though one roſe from the Dead.* The Premiſes conſidered, it is no more than needful, yea, it is very needful, that ſinners ſhould again and again be admoniſhed of that bitter Root afore ſaid, and reſpectively thereunto I ſhall beſpeak you in the

the words of the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 12. 15. *Look diligently, leſt there be any ſuch bitter Root of Atheiſm and Infidelity ſpringing up amongſt you, and therewith many, or any be defiled.*

Queſt. But what Antidote is there againſt this Poyſon, or Poyſonous Root?

Anſw. We have *Moſes* and the Prophets. As the Fleſh and Blood of a Viper (they ſay) is the beſt Antidote, or Remedy againſt her ſting; ſo the Scriptures themſelves, being taken together with their atteſtations, (*i. e.*) the Miracles, wherewith they were atteſted, are a very fit and proper Antidote to expel the ſaid Atheiſm and Infidelity. And for that Reaſon, I ſhall again ſay to ſuch who are Infected with the ſaid poyſon, *You have* Moſes *and the Prophets, hear them*; in ſpecial hear what *Moſes* doth more eſpecially threaten to ſuch Infidels as you are (*i. e.*) to ſuch as will not believe God Curſing them, but bleſs themſelves in their own Hearts, *Deut.* 29. 20. *The Lord will not ſpare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his Jealouſie will ſmoak againſt that man, and all the Curſes that are written in this Book ſhall lye upon him, and the Lord ſhall blot out his Name from under Heaven.*

If it be farther ſaid here, as it was by *Dives* to *Abraham*, *Let Lazarus*, let one be ſent from the dead, and then we will believe; We need no other Anſwer, than was that of *Abraham's*,

If men will not hear Moſes *and the Prophets, neither will they be perſwaded though one roſe from the dead.* What ſay you to this? Do you believe this ſaying of *Abraham?* Is this ſaying Credible with you? In it ſelf verily it is, and the Evidence of its Credibility is this, *viz.* Becauſe if one ſhould riſe from the dead, and teſtifie what you would have, he could not give more convincing Evidences of his being ſent from God, or of his Teſtimony to be a Divine Teſtimony, than did *Moſes* and the Prophets: and therefore as was ſaid to the unbelieving Jews (*John* 7. 31. *When Chriſt cometh, will he do more Miracles than this Man hath done?*) In like ſort do I ſay to the Atheiſts and Infidels here ſpoken to, If one ſhould riſe from the dead according to your wiſh, would he, or could he do more Miracles than *Moſes* did? (*thoſe many wondrous works in the Land of* Ham, *and Terrible things by the Red Sea,* Pſal. 106. 22.) And then thoſe two Prophets of the Lord, *Elijah* and *Eliſha* did? Why then ſhould what *Abraham* here ſays, ſeem ſtrange to you, or incredible, he ſaying, *That if ye will not believe* Moſes *and the Prophets, neither would ye believe, if you had your wiſh, in ones being ſent unto you from the Dead.*

Yet for your farther ſatisfaction, I ſhall here produce and Tranſcribe a Teſtimony as near to the Teſtimony of one riſen from the dead, as any

any that ever I heard of, or at preſent can think upon, I mean, of a Perſon, that was ſuddenly to look Death in the Face, and to Encounter with deadly danger: It is the Teſtimony of the Noble Earl of *Marleborough*, who being a Captain of one of His Majeſties Ships, employed in the War againſt the *Dutch*, 1665. did a very few days before that bloody Battel, *June* the 3. and wherein God gave our King a ſignal Victory, and wherein that Valiant Count loſt his Life; I ſay, a very few days before that Fight he wrote to an Honourable Perſon a Courtier, the following Letter, which having ſeen and Tranſcribed preſently after his Death out of a Copy ſent to ſome of his near Relations in *Somerſet-ſhire*, and having ſince then preſerved in my Study, as a precious Monument of that Noble Captain, I ſhall here inſert, well hoping, that although I do it *Motu proprio*, and of my own Head, yet that it will not be judged an Offence in me by any one whatſoever; the Matter therein contained tending ſo much to the Glory of God, and the Glory of that Noble Peer, and to the good of the Souls of Men, eſpecially of thoſe Men-Monſters (the Atheiſts and Infidels) I am ſpeaking of, and to. The words of his moſt memorable Letter are (word for word) as followeth.

SIR,

SIR,

I Believe the goodneſs of your Nature, and the Friendſhip you have always born me, will Receive with kindneſs the laſt Office of your Friend. I am in Health enough of Body, and through the Mercy of God in Jeſus Chriſt, well diſpoſed in Mind. This I premiſe, that you may be ſatisfied, that what I write, proceeds not from any phantaſtick terrour of Mind, but from a ſober Reſolution of what concerns my ſelf, and an earneſt deſire to do you more good after my Death, than in my Example (God of his Mercy pardon the badneſs of it) in my Life time hath done you harm. I will not ſpeak ought of the Vanity of this World, your own Age, and Experience will ſave that Labour. But there is a certain thing goes up and down the World, called Religion, dreſt and pretended phantaſtical, and to purpoſes bad enough, which yet by ſuch evil dealing loſeth not its Being. The great good God hath not left it without a Witneſs more, or leſs; ſooner, or later in every

every Mans boſom, to direct us in the purſuit of it; and for the avoiding thoſe inextricable diſquiſitions and entanglements our own frail Reaſon would perplex us withal, God of his Infinite Mercy hath given us his Holy Word, in which as there are many things hard to be underſtood, ſo there's enough plain and eaſie to quiet our minds, and to direct us concerning our future Being. I Confeſs to God and you, I have been a great neglecter, and I fear, a deſpiſer of it. God in his Mercy Pardon me that dreadful fault. But when I retired my ſelf from the noiſe and deceitful Vanities of the World, I found no true Comfort in any other Reſolution, but what I had from thence. I Commend from the bottom of my Heart the ſame to your (I hope happy) Uſe. Dear Sir Hugh, *let us be more generous than to believe we dye as the beaſt that periſheth, but with a Chriſtian, Manly, brave Reſolution look at what's Eternal. I will not trouble you farther. The onely Great Good God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, direct you to*

an

an Happy End of your Life, and ſend us a joyful Reſurrection; ſo prayeth

Your True Friend,

Marleborough.

Old James, near the Coaſts of *Holland*, *April* 24. 1665.

I beſeech you Commend my Love to all my Frinds, but in particular, I pray you, that my Couſin Glaſcock *may have a ſight of this Letter, and as many of my Friends beſides as you will, or any elſe that deſire it. I pray grant this my Requeſt.*

It

It was, you perceive, the mind of this Noble Count, that this his dying Letter might Live after him, and be imparted to all his Friends: Hereupon I am confirmed in my perſwaſion, that by my publiſhing thereof I have Offended neither the Living, nor the Dead. And having thus adventured to Publiſh it, I will make no Comment upon it, albeit, I do Judge, that every Line therein is worthy to be written in Letters of Gold, and a Monument more Glorious to his memory, than any of Braſs, or Stone graven by Art, and mans device: Nor (whatſoever I have heard of him) will I ſay ought more, than he doth in this his Penitential Letter in effect ſay of himſelf, *viz.* That he had been, as a Great Man, ſo a great Sinner; but being Converted, and having obtained mercy (the Grace of our Lord having been exceeding abundant, with Faith and Love, which is in Chriſt Jeſus, 1 *Tim.* 1. 14. to uſe the words of his Fellow-Convert in a like Caſe) he did earneſtly endeavour the Converſion of others, eſpecially of ſuch as he had perverted. I ſhall onely, with reference to the ſaid Letter, ſpeak a few words to God and man.

I am Informed ſince the Compoſing of theſe Sermons for the Preſs, that the Letter of this Noble Count hath been Printed by a worthy Miniſter, in a Book, Styled, *Fair Warning to a Careleſs World.*

1. To

1. To God in the way of Praiſe and Thankſgiving, well hoping the Noble Author thereof to be in Heaven, there in Conſort with Saints and Angels, ſinging *Hallelujahs*, I will adjoyn my ſelf to his Triumphant Chariot, ſaying, in the words of his fore-named fellow-Convert, *Now, unto the King Eternal, Immortal, Inviſible, the onely wiſe God (whoſe Judgments are unſearchable, and his ways paſt finding out) be Honour and Glory for ever and ever.* Amen.

2. To mah, in the way of Humble Advice and Counſel. Liſten, Gentlemen, in the fear of God to the words of the ſaid Letter. Let Religion be your buſineſs, not the Object of your Contempt, and Scorn. If you have not liſtened to the voyce of thoſe who have Preached to you out of a Pulpit, yet liſten to one, that doth here ſpeak to you, as our Saviour occaſionally ſometimes did, out of a Ship. If the words of the Living have not, at leaſt, let the words of a Dying man prevail with you. If you regard not the words of a Presbyter, at leaſt, do not ſlight theſe of a Souldier. Though you deſpiſe the Teachings of a poor Country Miniſter (ſuch a one as my ſelf, *ex vulgo Cleri*) yet diſdain not to be Inſtructed by a Gentleman. Though you do leſs value the Admonitions and Advice of a Lord Biſhop, yet as for the words of ſuch a Lord as this, let me beſpeak

ſpeak your Entertainment of his Advice, in the words of *Daniel* to *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Let his Counſel be acceptable to you, and break off your ſins by Righteouſneſs.* And as for thoſe who do prize (God forbid I ſhould ſay, adore) the Reliques of a Saint, I ſhall commend unto them the ſaid Saint-like Letter, as a Relique well worthy of their great eſteem and veneration. I ſhall conclude this Section, (wherein I have ſpoken ſo largely of Atheiſm and Infidelity, as Grand Impediments to ſinners their Reformation) with that Admonition of the Apoſtle, ſaying, *Heb.* 3.12. *Take heed, Brethren, leſt there be in any of you an evil Heart of unbelief in departing from the Living God.* The Apoſtle ſaying, ἐν τινι, In any of you, doth imply, that ſuch an evil heart is incident to all, and for that cauſe I ſhall in this Admonition direct my ſpeech to all of all ſorts diſtributively, ſaying, *Take heed, leſt there be in any of you* (Man, or Woman; Family, or Tribe; high, or low; Rich, or Poor; Learned, or unlearned) *an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the Living God.*

SECT.

SECT. XXXIX.

HAving ſpoken concerning the more Notable Impediments, which are to be removed out of the way of Reformation, if we intend to be Reformed, I will onely for the remainder of what will be ſaid in this Uſe of Direction, ſuggeſt two ſpecial means for our Reformation, to the Uſe whereof I ſhall exhort you, and theſe are, the Word of God, and Prayer.

1. The Word of God contained in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament, of which St. *Paul* ſays, *that it is able to make us wiſe to Salvation*, 2 Tim. 3. 15. and as for the ſpecial Profit thereof he doth inſtance in ſeveral particulars, ſaying, *That being given by Inſpiration θεόπνευστος, being breathed by God, it is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs, that the Man of God may be perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good works.* Being to ſpeak of Gods Word in this place, as a ſpecial means of Reformation, I ſhall Commend it to your Eſtimation, and Converſe upon a two-fold account.

1. As

1. As the Objective Rule of Reformation.

2. As the Instrumentally efficient Cause of Subjective Reformation.

1. Gods Word is the Rule of Reformation. Whence that of the *Psalmist* (119. 9.) *Wherewithal shall a Young Man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy Word.* Would any one Reform, or be Reformed? (for that's meant by cleansing our way) let him heed the Direction of Gods Word. Gods Word is the Rule of a Christian Life; and in its kind, and as to the ends and purposes, for which God gave it, it is a most Compleat and Perfect Rule. I put in those Restrictive Expressions [in its kind, and as to the ends thereby intended by God] lest any one should ὑπερεκτείνειν (to use the Apostles expression, 2 *Cor.* 10. 14.) reach and stretch it beyond its measure, as some have done, supposing it to be such a Rule, and for such things, which it was not intended for. Know then, that Gods Word, although it's a Rule, *In suo genere*, yet it is not so *in omni genere* (i. e.) It is not a Rule to Direct us in all manner of Actions of Humane Life, *e. g.* It doth not direct Artists, the Professors of any Arts and Sciences (styled Liberal, or illiberal) the best way, or Method, how to manage and Order their work, Masons and Carpenters how to

Build an Houſe, Mariners how to Order their Compaſs, &c. God did not intend, or give his Word as a Rule for ſuch purpoſes, Mens own Natural Reaſon and Experience being ſufficient to direct them in, and for things of that Nature.

2. Although Gods Word in ſome things was intended for a Rule, yet not a like Rule in thoſe very things; for in ſome things it was intended onely as a general, and in ſome things as a particular Rule. *e. g.* In ſome things it was intended onely as a general Rule, *viz.* In Circumſtances of Gods Worſhip not determined by God himſelf in his Word; Circumſtances as to Veſtures, Poſtures, Geſtures, &c. Gods Word doth not determine the ſite or poſture of a Miniſter in Preaching; whether to ſtanding, or ſitting; nor his Veſt, whether as to Linnen, or Wollen; whether as to black, or blew, green, or white; or as to his Head, whether he Preach Covered, or uncovered: Nor doth it determine the poſture, whether of the Miniſters, or the Peoples Receiving the Lords Supper, whether to ſtanding, ſitting, or kneeling, nor to the manner of their Receiving, whether by the Mouth onely, or by Hand and Mouth; whether by taking themſelves the Elements from the Table, or Receiving them from the Hand of the Miniſter. The like Circumſtances pertaining to this and other

parts

parts of Gods Worship, as undetermined by the Word of God might be instanced in, Respectively whereunto the Word of God is onely a general Rule, prescribing onely indefinite-wise, That all things be done decently, in Order, and to Edification. And it becomes Christians, as they Love their own Peace (I mean, not onely their External Peace and quiet, but also the Peace of their own Consciences and freedom from superstitious enlargements thereof) or the Peace of the Church whereof they are Members, to take heed of stretching Gods Word beyond its Line, by making it a Rule in, or for such things as it was not designed for, or by making it a particular Rule in such things, wherein God did intend it onely for a Rule as to generals. We must be careful to understand and apply it κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τῆς κανόνος (to speak in the Language of the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 10. 13.) according to its due measure, but no farther. It were easie to demonstrate the mischiefs of doing otherwise, to which mischiefs it hath betrayed the *Socinians*, Anabaptists, with many others among us, whom I am loath to give a Name unto.

3. But in some things Gods word is a particular Rule, *viz.* In all things necessary to Salvation, whether pertaining to Faith or Manners. There is nothing necessary to Salvation, whether to be believed, or practised; to be

done, or left undone, but what this Word of God doth reveal. And as to these things it is a perfect and an adequate Rule. If any Person shall pretend, that such and such a thing is sinful, and ought to be Reformed, and that such and such things are wanting, and ought therefore to be supplyed; he ought to produce the Word of God as the Rule in such Matters, proving by the Scriptures, that such and such things are forbidden by the VVord as sinful, and that such and such things are Commanded by the VVord as necessary Duties, and of standing Obligation; otherwise we may Answer, as one of the Ancients in a like Case, *Non credo, non ago, quia non lego,* I do not believe it, I do not practise it, because I do not find it Commanded in Scripture, or I do practise it, because I do not find it there forbidden. Thus do we maintain the Word of God to be in its kind, and as to the Salvation of Mens Souls, a perfect Rule; I mean, we do thus maintain it against the Papists, who do obtrude their unwritten Traditions, as of equal Necessity and Authority with the Scriptures. But as *Abraham* said to the King of *Sodom*, (*Gen.* 13. 21. *Give me the Souls, and take thou the Goods to thy self.*) So may we say to our Adversaries of *Rome*, Give us the Scriptures, and as for Traditions, since ye will keep them, keep them to your selves.

2. Gods

2. Gods Word is the Instrumental Efficient Cause of a sinners Reformation, it being designed by God to Convert them from the Error of their ways, *Psal.* 19. 7. *The Law of God is perfect*, says *David*, *Converting the Soul. Sanctifie them through thy Truth*, says our Saviour, praying for the World of Believers, *Thy Word is Truth*, John 17. 17. *Of his own Will begat he us*, says St. *James*, *By the Word of Truth*, Chap. 1. 18. The most notorious sinners have by means of Gods Word been Reformed. See the story of the *Ephesian* Converts, Recorded *Acts* 19. the Conclusion whereof is in these words, *v.* 20. *So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed.* When Scripture speaks of a sinners being Reformed by these things, (*i. e.*) by Afflictions; or relates the story of any sinners, who by that means have been Reformed, we must not Understand as if their Reformation had been wrought meerly by their Sufferings, without Gods Word, or as if Gods Word had had no hand, or stroke at all in the thing; whereas divers Causes may concur, and have their several Interests in Co-operating the selfsame effect. Gods Word doth work with his Rod, and his Rod with his Word; but whether the one or the other doth more immediately

Eph. 5. 26. Christ gave himself for the Church, that he might Sanctifie and cleanse it by the Word.

ately (under God) work a sinners Reformation, it is not material to dispute. We may truly affirm, that albeit sinners are sometimes Reformed by Gods VVord without his Rod, yet never by his Rod without his VVord. It is by means of Gods Rod that he doth sometimes bring his VVord to their remembrance, (which otherwise would never have been minded) and doth set it home upon their Consciences. Thence that saying of *David*, *Psal.* 94. 12. *Blessed is the Man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and Teachest him out of thy Law.* It is not meer Chastisements, of themselves, without the Divine Teachings of the VVord, that doth work any sinner to a blessed Reformation.

The Premises Considered, would sinners be Reformed by these things, (*i. e.*) by the Judgments of God upon them, let them be exhorted to acquaint themselves with this Rule of Reformation, The VVord of God. VVhat though, before Gods punishing Hand was upon you, like those wicked wretches in *Psal.* 50. 17. *You did cast Gods Word behind you*, not looking into a Bible once a Moon, yet from hence forwards be not ye such strangers to it. Imagine you heard the voyce of Gods Rod speaking to you, as St. *Austin* Reports of himself to have heard, saying, *Tolle, Lege*, take up and Read. Take heed of Despising the

Scrip-

Scriptures (Gentlemen) or of Quarrelling with them, becauſe they are not in all things according to your mind. Of all quarrels quarrelling with the Scriptures is of dangerous Conſequence. Gentlemen may with leſs danger fall out, and quarrel one with another, than with the Scriptures. *Quench not the Spirit. Deſpiſe not Prophecyings*, 1 Theſ. 5. 19,20. Deride not the plain Preaching of Chriſts Goſpel, *it having pleaſed God by the Foolishneſs of Preaching to ſave Believers*, 1 Cor. 1. 21. And the Goſpel of Chriſt being the wiſdom of God, and the Power of God, 1 *Cor.* 1. 18. *Even the Power of God to Salvation to every one that believeth*, Rom. 1. 16. If ever God open your Eyes ſo to ſee your ſins, as to affect you hearts with Remorſe for them; this your ſin in neglecting and deſpiſing the Scriptures will lye heavy upon your hearts, as it did, it ſeems, upon that Noble Count, whoſe Heart otherwiſe, and as a Souldier, was as the heart of a Lyon, as is *Huſhai*'s Deſcription of a valian.

Can Gentlemen and Ladies find Time to Read a Romance, a Play-Book, and will they take no Time to Read the Book of God? Will they read the former to make them witty for Ordinary Diſcourſe, and not the latter, to make them wiſe to Salvation? Will not Ladies Repent one day to have ſpent ſo much Time in Reading Sir *Philip Sidney*'s Arcadia, and ſo little in peruſing the Epiſtles of St. *Paul*?

liant Man, 2 *Sam.* 17. 10. You will then lament with him in *Prov.* 5. 11. saying, *How have I hated Inſtruction, and my Heart deſpiſed Reproof*, &c. Remember the dying words of him, that hath told you, what an Infinite mercy it is, that for the avoiding of thoſe inextricable entanglements our own trail Reaſon would entangle us withal: God hath given us his Holy Word, in which there is enough, plain and eaſie enough to be underſtood, to quiet our minds, and to direct us concerning our Future Being. It was Gods ſingular goodneſs to his *Iſrael*, in that he ſhewed to them his Statutes and his Judgments, having not dealt ſo with every Nation, *Pſal.* 147. *last.* Let us accordingly prize and value the Word of God, and his Mercy in making it known unto us; let us value it, as *David* did, above Gold and Silver. Let us ſtudy the Scriptures, let them be our frequent Meditation. Let our Hearts be awed by it, as was *Davids*, ſaying, *Pſal.* 119. 161. *My Heart ſtandeth in awe of thy Word.* *David*, who was ſo Magnanimous as to ſay, *Though an Hoaſt ſhould encamp againſt*

Eſay 8. 20. *To the Law and to the Teſtimony.* Conſult the Word of God upon all due occaſions; O that Kings would do as *Jehoſhaphat* did, (*i. e.*) Enquire at the Word of the Lord, 1 *Kings* 22. 5. And as *David* did, *Pſal.* 119. 24. (*i. e.*) make the Scriptures their Cabal, their Counſellers, or men of their Counſel, as the word is in the Original.

me,

me, my Heart shall not fear, yet says, that his Heart stood in awe of Gods Word. He that fears God, will fear the Word of God. There is no hope of the Reformation of a sinner so long as he is a neglecter and despiser of the Word of God.

SECT. XL.

2. THE last Means I shall Direct you unto, is Prayer. We should Pray at all Times (*Psal.* 62. 8. *Trust in him at all Times, ye People, pour forth your Hearts before him*) especially in the Time of Trouble, *Psal.* 50. 15. Suffering Times are Praying Times. This is implyed to be a special Duty of a People under the Afflicting Hand of God; implyed, I say, in 2 *Chron.* 7. 14. *If my People, that is called by my Name, shall humble themselves, and Pray, and seek my Face ..... Is any Man Afflicted*, says St. *James*, *let him Pray*. It is the manner of some when under suffering, especially more than Ordinary, to Curse and Swear, and like those in *Rev.* 16. 9, 11. gnawing their Tongues for pain, to Blaspheme the God of Heaven. This is a sin, of which St. *James* doth in the fore-going verse admonish us, saying,

saying, *Above all things, my Brethren, swear not.* to which words of his I may not unfitly add, Above all Times swear not in Suffering Times, *but if any Man be afflicted, let him pray.* As the same Apostle therefore Exhorts, (*Chap.* 4. 10. *Let your Laughter be turned into Mourning, and your Joy into Heaviness.*) In like sort do I exhort you, saying, Let your Cursing and Swearing, in the Time of Affliction especially, be turned into Praying. Swearing and Cursing will mend nothing, it will Reform nothing, neither Persons, nor things. If any good be done, or expected, it must be expected and effected by the contrary, (*i. e.*) by Praying. *I will go,* says God, *to my place, till they seek my Face,* Hos. 5. 15. Till sinners cease their spitting into Gods Face (spitting Oaths and Curses into the Face of God) and do seek his Face by humble and earnest Prayer; God seems resolved to continue in his with-drawing his gracious presence from them. O! when will sinners Pray, if not when they are under Divine Punishments for their sins? *In their Affliction,* says God, *they will seek me early,* Hos. 5. 15. (*i. e.*) They will then do it, or they will never do it. The Mariner that will not Pray in a storm, will never Pray.

Quest. WHat is it, that sinners under punishment for their sins should more especially Pray for?

Answ. Not

Answ. Not so much that their Punishment may be removed, but that by it themselves may be Reformed. Many there be, who will pray for the removing of Gods Judgments, in which sence that of the *Psalmist* is to be understood, *Psal.* 78. 34. *When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned, and enquired early after God*: But what was it they sought to God for? See *Hos.* 7. 14. *It was for Corn, and Wine, and Oyl*, for a mitigation, or removal of their sufferings: Yea, there is scarce any, but will after their fashion, pray to God to this purpose: *Pharaoh* himself doth beg the Prayers of *Moses* and *Aaron*, intreating them to mediate with God thus far forth in his behalf, *Exod.* 10. 17. But there are few, who are importunate with God to take away their sins (the Causes of his Judgments) that they may be Reformed by the same. This is that which the Prophet *Daniel* doth acknowledge and complain of, saying, *Dan.* 9. 13. *All this evil is come upon us, yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our Iniquities, and understand thy Truth.*

Though the Prophet *Isaiah* testifies of the People, That in trouble they did visit God and pour forth their Prayers, when his Chastening was upon them, Chap. 26. 16. Yet the Prophet *Daniel* says, they did not pray that they might turn from their Iniquities, and understand Gods Truth.

Truth. He doth not say, That they made no Prayer at all to God, or did not Pray to him to turn from his wrath; but the thing which he confesseth, is, that they did not pray to the Lord, that his Judgments might be so Sanctified, as that they might thereby be turned from their Iniquities. VVhereas this is the main thing which they should have prayed for, and without which their praying otherwise was to little purpose, and scarce worthy the name of praying, God himself calling it by the name of howling, *Hos.* 7. 14. *And they have not cryed unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their Beds*; and the Reason of Gods saying thus is rendred in the words immediately following, *viz.* The main thing, which they shou'd have minded, they did not pray for, *viz.* That they might be made better by their Sufferings. Their Petitions for Corn, and VVine, and Oyl, were but *Vox Naturæ*, like the crying of a Beast, or the lowing of the Ox for Fodder, or the howling of some Beast for Prey, being pinched with hunger, rather than the Prayers of a sinner sensible of his sin, as the Cause of his Misery. Let us then under all Sufferings for sin, pray to God, and excite one another to pray, as the Church being in a Suffering Condition doth, saying, *Lam.* 3. 41. *Let us lift up our Hearts with our Hands to God in the Heavens.* Let us pray, and pray heartily

heartily (lifting up Heart as well as Hand) and let the main thing prayed for be a Reformation by Gods Judgments that are upon us. Let us so mind, and be within our selves so sollicitous for a Reformation of our sins, when we are under Sufferings for them, as that if God should demand of us the Reason of our importunate Prayers at such a Time, as our Saviour did of Blind *Bartimeus*, saying, *Mark* 10. 51. *What wilt thou, that I should do unto thee?* We may be able to Answer truly, *Lord, that I may be Reformed by these things.* And verily, if we would be Reformed by these things, it is necessary we should pray to that end; for it is not these things, that of themselves can work a Reformation, as hath been Observed in the fourth Branch of the Use of Information. The Word of God alone, without the Spirit and Blessing of God Accompanying the same, will not Convert a sinner; and much less the Rod of God. It is neither Gods Word, nor Gods Rod; whether in Division, or Conjunction; whether singly, or together; that by themselves, or as separated from the concurrence of Gods Blessing Prospering the same, that can Reform a sinner; as we see in Experience, many sinners being not one jot the better for all their Sufferings, even as it was with *Ahaz*, of whom it was said, 2 *Chron.* 28. 22. *This is that King* Ahaz; or, as some ren-

der

der it, *Idem erat Rex* Ahaz, *Ahaz* was *Ahaz* ſtill; *Ahaz* was the ſelf-ſame wicked Perſon (both as a Man, and as a King) as ever he was before; not better'd a jot by all Diſtreſſes. As we do therefore bleſs our Food, and Phyſick, ſo ſhould we pray to God to bleſs our Afflictions, that the Lord would turn the Curſe into a Bleſſing, and make them to be as Healing Medicines to our Spiritual Maladies. As the Mariners therefore did awaken *Jonah*, ſaying, *What meaneſt thou, O Sleeper? Ariſe, Call upon thy God*-- In like ſort, and with the like words, I will endeavour to awaken ſinners under the puniſhing hand of God, ſaying, what meaneſt thou, O ſecure ſinner? Ariſe, Call upon thy God, Pray to him ſo to Sanctifie thy Sufferings, as that all the Fruit thereof may be to take away thy ſin, and thereupon that thou periſh not. Till ſinners are by their Sufferings thus brought upon their knees, as was *Manaſſes* (of whom we Read, 2 *Chron.* 33. 12. *That when he was in Affliction he beſought the Lord his God.*) There is little hope of their Reformation; but when it is once come to that paſs, as that it may be ſaid of a ſinner, as the Lord to *Ananias* ſaid of *Saul*, *Behold, he Prayeth, and prays to God*, ſaying, *Lord, what wouldſt thou have me to do?* When a ſinner doth thus put his mouth in the Duſt (as is the Expreſſion, *Lam.* 3. 29.) then indeed

there

there is fair hope of his being Reformed by these things.

SECT. XLI.

3. I Come now to the Third kind of Direction promised to be insisted upon, (*i. e.*) A Direction to such Motives as are fit and proper to induce us to the said Reformation exhorted unto. To this end consider,

1. What sin is, according to the Expression of the Text, *viz. It is a walking contrary to God*; and consider withal what manner of One he is, or that God is, whom we by sin do walk contrary unto.

As for the former, I have already shewed of sin in general, That all sin is contrary to God, to his Nature, to his Honour, and to his Law and Will. The Papists indeed do distinguish sins into those they call Venial, and Mortal, saying of These, that they are *Contra*, against the Law of God; but of Those, that they are onely *Præter*, beside the Divine Law, or Will of God. But Scripture doth warrant no such distinction with their Explication thereof, all sin being point blank against the Law of God. I have also manifested, that sinning notwithstand-

ſtanding Divine puniſhments upon us for it, is for ſpecial Reaſons, or in ſpecial reſpects a walking contrary to God, for as much as it doth directly thwart, or oppoſe Gods end in puniſhing ſinners in this Life, it being for their Reformation. Now, the conſideration of this very thing ſhould move us to Reform, for as much as long as we are unreformed, we are in a Courſe, or way oppoſite to God. But more eſpecially ſhould this move us to Reform, conſidering, who, and what manner of God he is, whom, ſo long as we are un-reformed, we do walk contrary to; and as touching God, I ſhall ſay of him, or commend to your Conſideration concerning him no more than what he ſays of himſelf in the firſt verſe of this Chapter, ſaying, *I am the Lord* (Jehovah) *your God* He then is *Jehovah*, and he is our God. Conſider then,

1. That he is *Jehovah*. By this Name he was not altogether unknown to Mankind from the beginning, for as much as we find the name in *Gen.* 2. 4. though in after Ages he was better known thereby, *viz.* by verifying the importance thereof, *Exod.* 6. 3. Now, this Name doth import more eſpecially three things in God, *viz.*

1. His Almighty Power and Greatneſs, his being of himſelf before the World was, according to that in *Iſay* 44. 6. wherein he is brought in,

in, saying of himself, *I am the first, and I am the last.*

2. His goodness in giving Being to the Creatures, he being Maker of Heaven and Earth.

3. His Faithfulness in making good his Promises by Answerable effects.

Let sinners then Consider, that the God whom they walk contrary unto, *is,*

1. The Great God, the Supreme Lord of Heaven and Earth, who hath a right of Rule and Dominion over us, in whose hand is Power and Might, so that none is able to withstand him, as *Jehoshaphat* says of, and to him, 2 *Chron.* 20. 6. A God, who can at his pleasure Revenge himself upon all his Opposers; so that although sinners do oppose him, yet they cannot withstand him. And is it Wisdom, think we, or is it not Folly and Madness rather, to walk contrary to such a God? Hear the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 10. 22. *Do we provoke the Lord to Jealousie? Are we stronger than he?* What? than he, before whom all Nations are as nothing; yea, counted to him less than nothing, and vanity? *Esay* 40. 17.

2. He is God our Maker, who gave to us our Life and Breath, and all things, in whom we Live, and move, and have our Being. The God, who hath made us to differ in all the good we differ one from another, from the

brute Creatures; yea, from the Devil and his Angels: He is the God, that as he hath deserved of us infinitely well, so he never wronged us, or deserved ill of us. See what Challenges he doth make to those, who were ready (it seems) to Challenge him as defective in kindness to them, *Jer.* 2. 31. *Have I been a Wilderness to Israel? A Land of Darkness?* And *Mic.* 6. 3. *O my People, what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee? Testifie against me.* To walk contrary then to such a God, must needs be matter of great ingratitude, whereupon it may be with Reproach said to us, as *David* did to *Hushai*, *Is this thy kindness to thy Friend?* 2 Sam. 16. 17. Or as *Moses* said to Gods *Israel* of Old, *Deut.* 32. 6. *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O ye Foolish People, and unwise? Jehovah* is that God, who when he doth punish us seven times, could punish us seventy times seven for our sins; but in his Mercy and goodness is pleased not to deal with us after our sins, or to reward us after our Iniquities; and shall we walk contrary to such a God? A God so favourable and indulgent?

3. *Jehovah* is a Faithful God, whom we and our Fathers have found in all Ages to have been as good as his word: *Ye know*, says *Joshua* to the Elders of *Israel*, Chap. 23. 14. *in all your Hearts, and in all your Souls, that not one thing*

thing hath failed of all the good things, which the Lord your God ſpake concerning you; all are come to paſs unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof. And as *Joſhua* ſuggeſts that as a fit Argument to retain them in their Duty of walking with God, ſo may I well make uſe of it as an Argument to reduce ſinners to the ſame; whom, when tempted to ſin, it may well become to repel the Temptation, ſaying with *Joſeph*, in ſuch a Caſe, *Gen.* 39. 9. *How ſhall I do this great wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?* He, who ſays of himſelf, *I am Jehovah.* Eſpecially conſidering in the next place,

2. That this *Jehovah* is our God, a God in Covenant with us. So he was with *Iſrael* of Old, and ſo he is now alſo with profeſſed Believers in Chriſt, they being upon this account ſtyled *Abraham*'s Children, the Circumciſion, *Phil.* 3. 3. And the *Iſrael* of God, *Gal.* 6. 16. *Jehovah* is that God, whom every Chriſtian hath Covenanted to walk with, even all the days of his Life. So that in walking contrary to God, we do walk contrary to our own vows and promiſes; we walk as Women who break Wedlock do walk, and as Rebels, who take up Arms againſt their Sovereign, to whom they have ſworn Faith and Allegiance, do walk. Let the Conſideration of this particular then induce us to a Reformation.

SECT. XLII.

2. CONsider how much we have already Tranſgreſſed and been wanting to our Duty, in that we have not been hitherto Reformed without theſe things, and by other things rather than by the ſevere Judgments of God upon us. What theſe things are, I have already made inſtance in. *e. g.* We ſhould have Reformed by the hearing of Gods Word, his Commands, his Counſels, his wooings and beſeechings, his denounciations of Judgments, his inflicting of Judgment upon other ſinners like our ſelves, his former leſſer puniſhments upon our ſelves. By theſe things we ſhould have been Reformed, and before God did increaſe his puniſhments upon us to ſeven times more for our ſins; upon which account I may not unfitly ſay to you, as St. *Paul* to the Mariners, in *Acts* 27. 21. (*Sirs, ye ſhould have hearkned unto me, and ſo to have gained this harm and loſs.*) Sinners, ye ſhould have hearkned to the voyce of God ſpeaking to you in his Word, and ſpeaking to you alſo by his Rod, both that upon the back of others, and by thoſe leſſer Rods upon your own backs here-

heretofore, and ſo to have eſcaped theſe preſent more ſevere Judgments. Thus, I ſay, we ſhould have been Reformed by other things, without theſe things. And well may I ſay in one comprehenſive word, we ſhould have been Reformed by the Mercy, the manifold Mercies of God in all kinds. Even theſe of themſelves are ſtrong inducements to Reformation. Theſe are called the Cords of a Man, and Bands of Love; and that ſinners are not drawn to Duty, and kept cloſe to it by theſe, is brought in as a Circumſtance greatly aggravating their ſins, *Hoſ.* 11. 4. and 7. 13. Even this one branch of Gods rich goodneſs, (*i. e.*) his forbearance and long-ſuffering, ſhould according to his Native tendency effectually have led us to Repentance, *Rom.* 2. 4. Now, for as much as we have not been reformed by other things (as afore ſaid) and not without Theſe Things, Even this Conſideration ſhould the rather induce us to a reformation by theſe things. *Let the time paſt of our Life ſuffice us*, ſays St. *Peter*, *to have wrought the Will of the* Gentiles, *when we walked in Laſciviouſneſs, Luſts, exceſs of Wine* --- Thus ſaith the Lord God by the Prophet *Ezekiel* (*Chap.* 44. 6.) *O ye Houſe of* Iſrael, *Let it ſuffice you of all your abominations.*, O Conſider, If ſinners will neither be reformed without theſe things, nor by theſe things, when, or how will they, or can they

be Reformed? They, that will neither be drawn to their Duty by Gods Mercies of all sorts (those Cords of a Man, and Bands of Love before mentioned) nor driven thereto by his Judgments; that will neither be won by fair means, nor by foul, what shall I say to such sinners, but what our Saviour says to the Obstinate Jews, *John* 8. 24. *Ye shall dye in your sins?* Ah dreadful saying! But who, or what can help it? And what less therefore can be said in the present Case?

SECT. XLIII.

3. CONsider, That albeit, sinners have not been Reformed without these things, yet it is not too late to be Reformed by these Things; even a Reformation now, and by these things shall not be in vain. It must indeed be acknowledged, and that with shame and sorrow, that a Reformation by, and not before these things were inflicted, is too too late (precisely considered under the Notion of Duty) forasmuch as it was our Duty to have Reformed sooner, and that we did not sooner Reform is that for which we ought to be the more greatly ashamed, and more deeply

ly humbled, as was the Prodigal in this very Case, acknowledging, and saying to his Father, *Luke* 15. 18, 19. *Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son, make me as one of thy Hired Servants*; make me the least and lowest in thy Kingdom of Glory. But though it be at the latest, especially as becomes us to say, to be Reformed by these things, yet God tells us, to our Comfort, and assures us many ways that it is not too late. This God assures us of, many ways, or by many means. *e.g.*

1. By the Proclamation of his great Name, and Description of his Nature, as in *Exod.* 34. 6. *The Lord, the Lord God, Merciful and Gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness, and in Truth, keeping Mercy for thousands, forgiving Iniquity and Transgression, and Sin.* And *Mic.* 7. 18. *Who is a God like unto thee, that Pardoneth Iniquity, and passeth by the Transgression of the Remnant of his Heritage? He retaineth not his Anger for ever, because he delighteth in Mercy. He will turn again, he will have Compassion upon us, he will subdue our Iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the Sea.*

2. By the Promises of God, which are of two sorts.

1. Indefinite, or respecting the Repentance

and Reformation of ſinners indefinitely, as to the Time, or timeing thereof. Such is that promiſe in *Eſay* 55. 7, 8. *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord* (he names no particular Day, or time of the day, he onely ſays, *Let him return unto the Lord*) *and he will have mercy upon him, yea, abundantly Pardon* --- Prov. 28. 13. *He that Confeſſeth and forſaketh his ſins* (he names not the time when) *ſhall have Mercy.*

3. By his Promiſes reſpectively to the day of trouble, or time of Affliction; theſe Promiſes are of two ſorts, *viz.* Either implyed, or expreſs.

1. Gods Promiſe of Mercy and Gracious Acceptance of ſinners Reforming by theſe things, is implyed in all ſuch Commands of his in Scripture, wherein he doth call upon them, and Command them, even at ſuch a time to Repent and Convert, foraſmuch as he hath aſſured us upon his word, that he hath not ſaid to the Houſe of *Jacob*, *Seek ye me in vain*, Eſay 45. 16. Now, let ſinners take notice of ſuch his Commands in *Hoſ.* 14. 1. *O* Iſrael *return to the Lord thy God, for thou haſt fallen by thine Iniquity: Take with you words,*

Well may it be ſaid to ſinners upon this very account of Gods calling them to Repent and turn, as the Diſciples did to the Blind man, *Mark* 10. 49. *Ariſe, be of good Comfort, the Maſter calleth thee.*

words, and turn to the Lord, ſay to him, take away all Iniquity, and receive us graciouſly.

2. His Promiſes of Mercy to ſinners being Reformed by theſe things, are expreſs in multitudes of Scriptures, for which, ſee in this very Chapter, which notwithſtanding ſo many threatnings, is cloſed with a moſt gracious Promiſe, *v.* 40, 41. *If they ſhall Confeſs their Iniquity & the Iniquity of their Fathers--If then* (mark then) *their uncircumciſed hearts be humbled* --- 43. *Then will I remember my Covenant with* Jacob --- See *Deut.* 4. 29, 30. *If from the Land of thy Captivity thou ſhalt ſeek the Lord thy God, thou ſhalt find him, if thou ſeek him with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul; when thou art in Tribulation, and when all theſe things* (the things ſpoken of in my Text) *are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God* --- See *Zech.* 1. 3. 2 *Chr.* 7. 13, 14. And I doubt not, but that as for ſuch ſinners as have been Reformed by theſe things, it was not by theſe things ſimply and ſolely, but by the gracious Promiſes of God concurrent with theſe his Judgments, that their Reformation hath been wrought, or brought about, as was before intimated.

2 *Pet.* 1. 4. It is by Gods Promiſes that ſinners are made partakers of the Divine Nature.

3. God hath aſſured us, that it is not too late

late to be Reformed by these things, by the Examples of sinners Reformed by such things left upon Record in Scripture, who thereupon have found Mercy, and have been received into Favour with God, of which sort I will instance not in very many, but in some most remarkable, as in *Ephraim*, who being Chastened and thereupon repenting and Converting, says God, *Jer.* 31. 20. *Is* Ephraim *my dear Son? Is he a pleasant Child? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still, therefore my Bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have Mercy on him, saith the Lord.* Consider the Example of *Manasses*, who, though the greatest sinner upon Record in the Old Testament (for ought I know) and not returning to God till under great Affliction, yet obtained Mercy. See how the Prodigal sped, who never so much as minded a return to his Father, till Necessity drove him; and it was the mind of God by that Parable to Instruct us, that sinners, who in such a case do take such a course, shall speed no worse with him, or be otherwise entertained by him, than that Spendthrift did with, and was by his Compassionate Father. See also the Example of St. *Paul*, who though not Converted till he was laid flat upon the ground, and stricken with Blindness, yet then obtained Mercy; and this (as he says, 1 *Tim.* 1. 16.) for a Pattern unto all those who here-

hereafter ſhould by any means believe in Chriſt. All theſe things (Deſcriptions of God, his Precepts, and Promiſes, and Examples before inſtanced in) were written for our Learning; that we through the Comfort thereof might have hope, and thereupon be encouraged to repent and Convert. Let me therefore Exhort you with this Motive to be induced to a reformation, this being a Grand Motive, or Lure, which the Prophets of God in their Sermons of Repentance did hold forth, whereby to perſwade ſinners to a Reformation of their wicked Life, *Joel* 2. 12, 13. *Eſay* 1. 18. and 55. 6, 7, 8.

SECT. XLIV.

Q. CUI bono? As to what ſpecial Mercies and Benefits doth it appear, that it is not too late for ſinners to Reform, though not otherwiſe than till under, or by Afflictions?

Anſw. 1. A ſinners reformation in this caſe will prevent greater puniſhments. This is implyed in my Text, the tenour of the Threatning being Conditional (*If ye will not be Reformed by theſe things, Then will I alſo* --(*i. e.*) Then, but not otherwiſe.

2. It

2. It is the ready way to have present punishments in Gods good time removed. This is promised, as in multitudes of other Scriptures, so in the 42 verse of this Chapter, *Then will I Remember my Covenant with* Jacob ---- Afflictions are Gods Messengers, whose Errand is to reform sinners; and as Messengers use to be gone when they have done their Errand, so doth God use to recall those his Messengers, when their Errand is effected.

3. It is the ready way to procure the contrary, Blessings of Health, Peace, Prosperity -- See *Joel* 2. 14. *Who knows whether God will return, and Repent, and leave a blessing behind him* ---- And v. 18, 19. *Then will the Lord be Jealous for his Land, and pity his People; yea, the Lord will answer, and say to his People, behold, I will send you Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, and* ----

4. It is the undoubted way to obtain Pardon of sin (to speak simply) and reconciliation with God, together with all the concurrent and consequent Blessings thereof, whether pertaining to the Life that now is, or the Life which is to come. See *Esay* 1. 18. *Come now, and let us Reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow; though they be red like Crimson, they shall be as Wool.* See *Hos.* 14. 4. *Mal.* 3. 7. and the Scriptures *passim*, wherein are recorded

corded exceeding great and precious promiſes, which he that runs may read at leiſure.

Ob. But will one ſay, perhaps, to what purpoſe is it, for this or that particular Perſon or Perſons (here and there a few, like ſo many gleaning Grapes after the Vintage is done) to reform by Gods Judgments, ſo long as the generality will not be reformed? And, perhaps, another will ſay, as *Peter* did for himſelf and the other his fellow Apoſtles (*Loe, we have forſaken all, and followed thee, what ſhal we have therefore?*) Loe, I am become a reformed Man by theſe things, whereas others will not be reformed, what ſhall I have therefore?

Anſw. One and the ſame Anſwer, or Anſwers may ſeem to ſatisfie both theſe Queſtioniſts and Inquiſitors, & whom I ſhall the rather make Anſwer unto, becauſe it is not unlawful to ſerve God with an eye to our reward, nor is a Chriſtians ſervice the leſs Spiritual; nor is the God of Heaven (all his Attributes duly conſidered) the leſs Glorified upon that Account. And Oh that our Great and good God had more ſuch Servants, as ſome in their blind Zeal have called Mercenary! I dare be bold to ſay, with our Saviour in *John* 4. 23. *The Father ſeeketh ſuch to Worſhip him*, ſuch to Serve him, as do it with an eye to the recompence of reward. To the ſaid Queſtioniſts then, I Anſwer,

1. In

1. In general, even in the words of our Saviour, *Mat.* 10. *last. Verily you ſhall in no wiſe loſe your Reward.*

Queſt. As How? I Anſwer more particularly,

1. Perhaps God may for your ſakes do much for the whole Church and Nation wherein you Live. God doth ſometimes ſpare a ſinful Nation for the ſake of a few, eſpecially if thoſe few be of the moſt conſiderable Perſons in a Church or Kingdom; I mean, Great Men, Magiſtrates, Miniſters of State, and ruling Men. See *Jer.* 5. 1. *Run ye to and fro through the Streets of* Jeruſalem, *and ſee now, and know, and ſeek in the broad places thereof if ye can find a man,* (i. e.) as I humbly conceive, a Magiſtrate, or Great Man, (*i. e.*) a few ſuch Men, *that execute Judgment, and ſeek the Truth, and I will pardon it.* O that Great Men (the Perſons ſpoken of, and too by Name in that Chapter, *v.* 5.) would conſider that Scripture, how that Perſons of ſuch Eminency as themſelves, as they may do more, and uſually do more to the Deſtruction of a Nation, ſo they may do much more to the ſaving thereof, than Perſons of Ordinary Quality; and for the ſake of ſuch Reformers God would not ſtick to do very much. O how much doth God do many times for the ſake of the godly, though a remnant in Compariſon! How much would God have done

for

for *Sodom* for the ſake of Ten Righteous? *He* (ſays *Job*, ſpeaking of ſuch, Chap. 22. 30.) *ſhall deliver the Iſland of the Innocent, and it is delivered by the pureneſs of thine Hands.* That ſaying of God by the Prophet, *Ezek.* 22. 30. (*I ſought for a Man among them, that ſhould make up the Hedge, and ſtand in the gap before me for the Land*) doth imply, what gaps and breaches may poſſibly be made up by a leſs number, would they but do their Duty in perilous and threatning Times.

2. But abſolutely, and peremptorily I Anſwer, That however it fare with others, it ſhall undoubtedly be well with you. I have ſure Warrant to ſay ſo, and ſo may every one elſe; for God bids every Man (however ill it goes with the wicked, yet) *to ſay to the Righteous, It ſhall be well with him, for they ſhall eat the Fruit of their doings*, Eſay 3. 10. What a Comfort is this to the Righteous, that albeit, at preſent it is not ſo well, yet it ſhall be well with them, yea, well with them, when it ſhall be ill, and very ill with others, (*i.e.*) the wicked?

Queſt. But how well, or wherein will it be well with the reforming and reformed ſinner?

Anſw. 1. Perhaps God may take him away from the Evil to come, as he did that Reforming King *Joſiah*, 2 *Chron.* 34. 28. Thus the Prophet

Prophet Esay tells us, though it be little considered, *that the Righteous are taken away from the evil to come*, Chap. 57. 1.

2. Or, perhaps, God will by his gracious providence take an effectual Course for their personal safety and security, when the overflowing scourge cometh. Thus God did deal with *Jeremy* and *Ebed-melech*, Chap. 39. 14. and with those Mourners for the sins of the Times, who are said to have been Marked in the Fore-head, that the Destroying Angel might pass over them, *Ezek.* 9. 4, 5, 6. This God can do, whensoever he pleaseth (for he knoweth how to deliver his people out of Temptation, 2 *Pet.* 2. 9.) and he is pleased sometimes to do it.

3. If they are taken away in the Common Calamity, or Destruction befalling a Nation; (for in this respect there is sometimes one and the same event to the Righteous and the wicked, *Eccl.* 9. 1.) Yet in this Case they will have a two-fold benefit, or comfort.

1. Internal, (*i. e.*) peace in God, or peace of Conscience, their Consciences witnessing for them, that they have done the Duty of their places, and have no such guilt of the Common Destruction lying upon them, as others have. And oh what a Comfort and Benefit is this? 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. *This is our Comfort*, says St. *Paul*, *the Testimony of our Conscience* ...

ſcience ---- Such a Perſon will have boldneſs in the Day of Judgment, if we ſuppoſe that expreſſion in 1 *John* 4. 17. to be meant, as ſome do Interpret it, of the day of Common Calamities in this World; *at ſuch a Time he will not be afraid of evil tidings, becauſe his heart is fixed, truſting in the Lord*, as ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, concerning the Righteous, *Pſal.* 112. 7.

2. Eternal, or Peace with God in Heaven; even their Affliction, whatſoever it be, ſhall turn to their Salvation, *Phil.* 1. 21. All things ſhall co-operate for their final good, *Rom.* 8. 28. *Whoſoever ſhall call upon the Name of the Lord*, ſays the Apoſtle from the Prophet *Joel*, *ſhall be ſaved*, (i. e.) What true believer, what Perſon ſoever, that ſeareth God, and worketh Righteouſneſs, whether Jew or Gentile, ſhall be ſaved, *Rom.* 10. 13. Calling upon the Name of the Lord is the Deſcription of a Convert, or Chriſtian, 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. So that he who Reforms One, is ſure to ſave One; he who mends One, ſhall undoubtedly ſave One, (*i. e.*) In this ſence will that ſaying of the Prophet *Ezekiel* be verified, concerning ſuch Righteous Perſons, as were *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Job* in their Generations, *viz.* That albeit, they ſave neither Sons, nor Daughters (no Mothers Child) yet they ſhall ſave themſelves, *they ſhall by their Righteouſneſs deliver their own Souls from Eternal Deſtruction*, Ezek. 14. 14.

The meaning of which Expreſſion [*By their Righteouſneſs*] hath in another place been opened.

SECT. XLV.

4. FOR a Fourth and Laſt Motive, Conſider the Miſery and Miſchief of not being Reformed by theſe things; Conſider it, I ſay, as it is expreſſed in the words of my Text (*I will walk Contrary unto you, and will puniſh you yet ſeven times for your ſins.*) Wherein Obſerve,

1. What the Lot, or Doom of un-reformed ſinners will be, *viz.* Puniſhment.

2. What Puniſhment is, *viz.* It is a thing contrary to the ſinner.

3. Who it is that will puniſh them, *viz. Jehovah* the Lord will do it.

4. The Quality, or manner of their Puniſhment, *viz.* God will puniſh them in kind: As they walked contrary to him, ſo he will walk contrary to them.

5. The Quantity, Degree, or Meaſure of their puniſhment, *viz.* Seven times more for their ſins.

1. Conſider then firſt of all, what the Lot, or

or Doom of un-reformed ſinners will undoubtedly be, *viz.* Puniſhment. As the *Pſalmiſt* ſays, (*Pſal.* 11. 6.) *This ſhall be the Portion of their Cup. Though hand joyn in hand,* (i. e.) Though the wicked combine together for the ſecuring of themſelves, as did the Builders of *Babel* by projecting the building of a Tower that might reach to Heaven, *yet they ſhall not be unpuniſhed,* ſays *Solomon,* Prov. 11. 21. As God ſaid to the Heathen Nations, which bordered upon *Iſrael* (*Jer.* 25.29. *Loe, I begin to bring evil upon the City that is called by my Name, and ſhould ye be unpuniſhed? Ye ſhall not be unpuniſhed.*) In like ſort do I ſay to ſinners that do not Reform by theſe things, Loe, God will puniſh ſuch ſinners as were not Reformed meerly without theſe things, upon whom he never made Tryal, whether they would, or would not be Reformed by theſe things, (*i. e.*) by his Judgments, and ſhall you, whom he hath made Tryal of every way, and by all kinds of means to Reform, and yet would not be Reformed, neither without theſe things, nor by theſe things, ſhall you be unpuniſhed? You ſhall not be unpuniſhed. Let then the certainty of your puniſhment perſwade you to a Reformation by theſe things. And the rather, conſidering (which was the Second thing propoſed to Conſideration.)

2. What puniſhment is, *viz.* It is a thing

contrary to us. As ſin is a thing contrary to God, his Nature, Law, and Glory; ſo puniſhment is a thing contrary to our Nature, Will, Love, and Liking. *Correction is grievous to him that forſaketh the way*, ſays *Solomon*, Prov. 15.10. *No Chaſtening*, ſays the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 12.11. *for the preſent is* χαρᾶς, ἀλλὰ λύπης, *is matter of joy, but of grief and ſorrow.* And we do uſually manifeſt this by our ſighs and moans, and groans; ſighing with bitterneſs, and to the breaking of our Loyns (as are the Expreſſions, *Ezek.* 21.6.) Crying out, *woe and alas.* Sin indeed is a thing congenial, connatural, agreeable to the Sinner, as Meat is to the ſtomach; it is his pleaſure, a ſport and paſtime to him, *Prov.* 10.23. But the puniſhment of ſin is not ſo. Thence are the pleaſures of ſin ſtyled πρόσκαιρα, Temporary, pleaſures onely for a ſeaſon, *Heb.* 11.25. Whatever ſin is at preſent, at laſt their will be neither pleaſure, no profit in, or by it; *What Fruit had ye in thoſe things*, ſays St. *Paul* to the *Romans*, Chap. 6.21. *whereof ye are now aſhamed?* All ſin, whatever the pleaſure thereof is at preſent, will prove bitterneſs in the latter end, as *Abner* ſaid to *Joab*; it will at laſt (in the puniſhment thereof) bite like a Serpent, and ſting like an Adder, as is *Solomon*'s Expreſſion, *Prov.* 23.32. This ſweet Meat will have ſoure Sauce: Let the Conſideration then of this

particular

particular move us to Reform, for as much as we shal one day know by Experiencing the punishment of sin, what an evil thing, and bitter it is to forsake God, & the ways of God. O Consider, will punishment be at last to you, as sin is now, (*i.e.*) a pleasure? Surely nothing less; it will be as contrary to you as contrary may be; it will be as smoak to your Eyes, and as Vinegar to your Teeth, yea, as Fire to your Flesh, to use the Expression of St. *James*, Chap. 5. 2. Hear the Complaints of sinners under the punishment of sin, *I am*, says *Dives*, *Tormented in this Flame*, Luke 16. 24. *Who among us*, say those Sufferers, those sinners in *Zion*, Esay 33. 14. *shall dwell with Devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?*

3. Consider, who it is that will punish them, *viz. Jehovah. I'le punish them. Jehovah* will punish them, for what should hinder him? There are but two things imaginable to hinder, *viz.* Either want of Power, or want of Will, and both these do sometimes hinder the punishment of Offenders by the Sword of the Magistrate, *viz.*

1. Sometimes want of Power, such being the Offenders, either for their Number or quality, as that Governours cannot do what they would. Thus *David* Complains for want of Power (his Kingdom being in an unsetled con-

dirion) saying, *I am this day weak, though Anoynted King, and these Men, the Sons of Zerviah, are too strong for me*, 1 Sam. 3. 39.

2. Sometimes Magistrates want Will to punish Offenders, too too many being like *Gallio*, altogether careless to do their Office: Though they have the Sword in their hand, and have full hold of it, yet they bear it in vain. But neither of these, neither Power nor Will are wanting in God.

1. Not Power; for he is *Jehovah*. As *Abigail* said of *Nabal* (*Nabal is his Name, and Folly is with him.*) So I may say of God, his Name is *Jah*, his Name also is *El*, and strength, or Power is with him. The God of *Israel* is called the strength of *Israel*, 1 Sam. 15. 29. Prov. 21. 30. *There is no Wisdom, nor Understanding, nor Counsel against the Lord. Associate your selves, O ye People* (says God to his Enemies, *Esay* 8, 9.) *and ye shall be broken in pieces, and give ear all ye of far Countries, gird your selves and ye shall be broken in pieces, gird your selves and ye shall be broken in pieces.*

2. There is no want of Will in God to punish un-reformed sinners; this he hath declared in the Text it self, saying, *I'le punish you.* See the Declaration, both of his Power

Ezek. 24. 19. *I the Lord have spoken it, it shall come to pass, and I will do it.*

Power and Will together in that one Scripture, *Nah.* 1. 2, 3. *God is Jealous, and the Lord revengeth; the Lord Revengeth and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on his Adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his Enemies. The Lord is slow to Anger, and great in Power* -- And if God say, He will do a thing, we may well believe that it will Infallibly be done; *For God is not a Man, that he should lye, neither the Son of Man, that he should Repent: Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?* Num. 23. 19. O how vain is it for un-reformed sinners to think, that they can escape punishment from God! They may indeed escape punishment from Man, however by Man threatned; but from God they cannot, I mean, finally they cannot. God may possibly defer to punish, yea, it is Ordinary with God to do it (for sentence against evil works and workers is not by him always executed with speed, *Eccl.* 8. 11.) but sinners shall not escape always, *Psal.* 50. 21. *These things hast thou done*, says God to the wicked, *and I kept silence, thou thoughtest I was altogether such a one as thy self; but I will reprove thee, and set thy sins in Order before thy Face.* And as the *Psalmist* adds, saying, (*Now consider this, ye that forget God*) In like sort do I say to every un-reformed sinner, Consider this, ye that for-

get who it is that hath undertaken to puniſh you, having ſaid in the Text, *I will puniſh you*; yea, having ſaid it not once onely in this 24*th*. verſe, but having ſaid it alſo twice together in the 28*th*. verſe [And I, even I, will Chaſtiſe you.] Note well the doubling of the word, *Ani, aph, Ani, I, even I.* q. d. *I, who can do it*; yea, I, who cannot but do it, to whom it belongs to do it (*For it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, ſaith the Lord.*) Nor let any ſinners think to eſcape the puniſhing hand of God becauſe he is their God, (*i. e*) a God in Covenant with them: For God will puniſh his own People for their ſins as well as others, *Jer*. 9. 25. *Behold, the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will puniſh all them which are Circumciſed, with the uncircumciſed.* Circumciſion verily (the token of Gods Covenant, and the Badge of his People) is nothing (*i. e.*) as of it ſelf to exempt, or ſecure a Perſon, or a Nation from puniſhment. Yea, God will puniſh his own People, not onely as well as others, but rather than others, and more ſeverely upon this very Account of their being his People, *Amos* 3. 2. *You onely have I known of all the Families of the Earth, therefore I will puniſh you for all your Iniquities.* See *Numb*. 14. 34. *And ye ſhall know* (ſays God) *my breach of Promiſe.* If we break Covenant with God, God will break Covenant with us,

and

and we ſhall know it, will we, nil we; God will make us to know his breach of Covenant; this will God make the wicked, who are in Covenant with him, to know by his puniſhing them; yea, God will make them know, that this his puniſhing them, which is ſtyled a breach of Promiſe, or Covenant, is truly no breach at all on his part, for as much as they by their wicked courſes have diſobliged him, ſo that ſtill God remains faithful to his Promiſe (as the Apoſtle ſays, 2 *Tim.* 2. 13.) whatever through their unfaithfulneſs becomes of ſinners. See *Hoſ.* 8. 1, 2, 3. *If* Iſrael *tranſgreſs Gods Covenant, and treſpaſs againſt his Law* (the thing charged upon them, *v.* 1.) It is a vain thing for her to plead her Covenant-Intereſt in God for Protection and ſecurity, ſaying, *v.* 1. *My God, we know thee.* Briefly then, Let us ſeriouſly conſider the Perſon, who it is, that hath undertaken the puniſhment of un-reformed ſinners, that hath ſaid, *I will puniſh you.* Yea, as God hath ſaid it once and again (*I, even I, will puniſh you*) ſo let us once and again conſider it. Wherefore doth God double the Expreſſion (*I, even I,*) but that we ſhould double our attention to it, and conſideration of it? Hereupon, in alluſion to thoſe words of the Apoſtle, *Phil.* 3. 4. (*Rejoyce in the Lord alway, and again I ſay, Rejoyce.*) I ſhall exhort you, ſaying, Conſider this, ye that forget God,

God, and again I say, Consider it, who it is, that hath said over and over, *I, even I, will punish you for your sins*; and let this Consideration added to the two former Motives induce you to a Reformation by these things, always remembring that saying of the Apostle, *Heb.* 10. 31. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God.*

4. Consider how, or after what manner God will punish sinners that will not will not be reformed by these things, *viz.* He will pay them in their own Coin, and punish them in their kind. This was commended to Observersation as the eighth point of Doctrine, and as implyed in the manner of Expression [*I will walk contrary unto you, even as ye have walked contrary unto me.*] Or, according to another rendring of the words (already intimated upon Occasion, the word in the Original signifying both Contrariety and Chance) If ye walk with me, *in casu*, attributing your sufferings to Chance and Fortune, not to me as the Inflicting Cause, and to your sins, as the Meriting Cause thereof, *Ego etiam ambulabo in casu*, I will walk with you after that sort (*i. e.*) I will take no more care of you, than if I had left all things to sixes and sevens, to Chance and Fortune. However the words be rendred, the sence thereof makes for the purpose in hand, *viz.* That God will punish the sinners I am speak-

ſpeaking, of in their own kind. And this kind of puniſhment doth God oft-times in Scripture threaten ſinners with. See *Pſal.* 18. 26. *With the froward he will ſhew himſelf froward.* As frowardneſs in them was their ſin, ſo frowardneſs in God was to be their puniſhment, *Pſal.* 109. 17, 18. *As he loved Curſing, ſo let it come to him; as he delighted not in Bleſſing, ſo let it be far from him: As he cloathed himſelf with Curſing like as with his Garment, ſo let it come into his Bowels like Water, and like Oyl into his Bones.* O that the ſwearing Crew, thoſe Curſing Damn-mees of this wicked Generation would conſider that Scripture, and know what manner of puniſhment their puniſhment ſhall be, *viz.* They ſhall have Curſing enough, their belly-fulls, enough of Curſing one day; they ſhall have Curſe for Curſe, according to the *Hebrew* Proverb (*An Eye for an Eye, and a Tooth for a Tooth.*) Curſes came not more fluently out of their Mouths, than Curſes ſhall like Oyl and Water flow into their Bowels and Bones; and as they delighted not in Bleſſing (in Prayers to, and Praiſes of God) ſo bleſſing ſhall be far and far from them, even as far as Heaven is from Hell. O Conſider this, Gentlemen, or whoever among you are common Curſers; Conſider this, ye that by Swearing and

2 *Chron.* 15. 2. *If ye forſake God, God will forſake you.*

and Curſing do ſo much forget God and your ſelves. See alſo *Eſay* 30. 15, 16. *Thus ſaith the Lord, in returning and Reſt ſhall ye be ſaved, in quietneſs and Confidence ſhall be your ſtrength, and ye would not. But ye ſaid no; for we will flee upon Horſes, therefore ſhall ye flee.* As fleeing to *Egypt* was their ſin, ſo fleeing to *Egypt* was their puniſhment. And methinks the Obſerving of that ſaying ſhould mind the Curſers and Swearers afore-mentioned how God will doom them at the laſt day: Will not God ſentence them then, and ſay to them, As thou wouldſt go to the Devil, ſo thou ſhalt go to the Devil; as thou didſt ſo oft and oft wiſh, thou wert damn'd, ſo thou ſhalt be damn'd. As *Felix* ſaid to his Priſoner, *Haſt thou appealed unto* Cæſar? *unto* Cæſar *ſhalt thou go.* Even ſo how juſt is it with God in ſuch ſort to Sentence the Swearer, ſaying, Haſt thou ſo oft wiſh'd thy own Damnation? Thou ſhalt be damn'd according to thy wiſh; to the Devil and his Damnation ſhalt thou go. See alſo *Prov.* 21. 13. *Whoſo ſtoppeth his Ears to the Cry of the poor, he alſo ſhall cry himſelf, and ſhall not be heard.* And *James* 2. 13. *He ſhall have Judgment without Mercy, that hath ſhewed*

See 1 Sam. 2. 30. *If we deſpiſe God, God will deſpiſe us.*

Jer. 5. 19. As Serving ſtrange gods was their ſin, ſo Serving ſtrangers was their puniſhment.

ed no Mercy. As want of pity was their ſin, ſo want of pity is their threatned puniſhment. This, and the like threatnings have been verified in many examples Recorded in Scripture, in *Adonibezek*, Judg. 1. 7. *Threeſcore and ten Kings*, ſays he, *having their Thumbs and great toes cut off*, &c. *As I have done, ſo God hath requited me.* Thus God did requite *Ahab* and *Jezebel*, as Dogs licked up the blood of *Naboth*, ſlain by them, ſo did Dogs lick up their blood, 1 *Kings* 21. 19. Thus is New *Babylon* to be requited, even as was the Old, *viz.* As they ſhed blood, ſo they were to drink blood, *Rev.* 16. 6. Let the conſideration then of this kind of puniſhment move ſinners to a Reformation; for of all kind of puniſhment, this ſort, *viz.* To be dealt with, *Lege talionis*, by the Law of Retaliation; this, I ſay, is moſt vexatious, and cuts to the heart, to ſee the very Image and Superſcription of their ſin ſtampt upon their puniſhment.

Queſt. How will God in this caſe walk contrary to them, who walk contrary to him, by their not being Reformed by theſe things, and thereupon puniſh them in their kind?

Anſw. God will puniſh wilfulneſs with wilfulneſs: If we be wilful, God will be wilful; God will be as wilful and as reſolutely bent in his way, as ſinners are in theirs. *With the froward he will ſhew himſelf as froward, let the*

the froward be as froward as either they will, or can. And the things which God will resolutely fix upon, are summarily these two, *viz.*

1. That we shall never be Reformed; even as the punishment of those, who refused to come to that Marriage-Supper, to which they were invited, was not to taste of it, *Luke* 14. 24. So the punishment of such who will not be Reformed by these things, will be this, *viz.* That they shall not be Reformed, neither by them, nor by any other things. See two dreadful Scriptures for proof of this, *Ezek.*24. 13. *Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged,* (i. e.) Because I used the means of Reforming thee, not onely by my Word, but also by my Judgments, and thou wast not purged (*i. e.*) Reformed; *thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee.* When we read that Scripture, what cause have the Saints of God to set themselves to interceding with the Lord for *England*, as the Prophet *Amos* did for *Israel*, upon Gods revealing unto him their approaching Ruine, saying, *Ah Lord God, cease, I beseech thee*, Chap. 7? I say, what cause have the Servants of God to lift up their voyce with one accord,

See *Ezek.* 20.39. *Thus saith the Lord God, Go ye, Serve ye every one his Idols. q. d.* Since ye will be wicked Idolaters, go ye, be ye every one as wicked as ye will.

accord, and interceding for this ſinful Nation, to ſay, Ah Lord God, we beſeech thee? Let it never be ſaid of *England*, that the Lord would have purged her by all means, but ſhe would not be purged by any means, neither without puniſhments, nor by puniſhments; (neither by Peſtilence, nor by the Sword, nor yet by Fire) therefore ſhe ſhall not be purged till the Fury of the Lord reſt upon her. And let all the People ſay Amen, and Amen. See a like formidable Scripture, *Eſay* 22. 12, 13, 14. where for the ſin of Incorrigibleneſs God threatens, ſaying, *Surely this Iniquity ſhall not be purged from you till ye die.* O let the Conſideration of this perſwade us to a timely Reformation by theſe things, leſt God give us up to our wills, and leave us to our ſelves to walk in our own Counſels (as he did *Iſrael* of Old, *Pſal.* 81. 11, 12.) and to reſolve, That if we will harden our ſelves, we ſhall be hardned; yea, foraſmuch as like *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians* we will be hardned, he will harden our hearts, and we ſhall be hardned. There is no puniſhment on this ſide Hell, worſe than this. I might here inſtance in certain remarkable particulars, how God in the purſuit of this his Reſolution, or bent of will, doth deal with ſuch ſinners as will not be Reformed by theſe things, were it not that I haſten towards a Concluſion of the whole Tract concerning this Text.

2. The

2. The Second thing, which God in this Case of a sinners non-Reformation doth fixedly resolve upon, is, that he will certainly Plague and Punish them, that he will not spare them upon any intreaties. How often doth God say to this purpose in this Chapter? Look how often it is said in this Chapter, *If ye will*, it is as oft said by *Jehovah*, *I will*, *I will*, *I will*, *I will*, &c. (*i. e.*) If ye will sin, I will punish. And I say, God will not spare such sinners upon any intreaty, whether upon their own, or of others. Not upon their own, for see how he threatens, *Prov.* 1. from *v.* 24. to *v.* 30. *Because I called, and ye refused --- I will laugh at your Destruction --- Then ye shall call upon me, but I will not answer* --- Read the rest in your Bibles. And lest sinners should think, that this is hard Measure, let them consider, that God doth herein punish them in their own kind, meting to them with the self-same measure as they did measure to him, or (to speak in the Phrase of my Text) God herein doth but in such sort walk contrary to them, as they did

See *Ezek.* 24. 14. *I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it; I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I Repent.* Observe, that there are three will-nots in that verse.

2. Observe, that as their not Repenting was their sin, so Gods not Repenting was their punishment, so rightly did God punish them in their own kind.

did walk contrary to him (*i. e.*) as ſinners would not hear God, ſo he will not hear them; as they refuſed to hearken to his intreaties, ſo he refuſeth to hearken to theirs, this being that which he hath before-hand made known to ſinners in that Proverb of *Solomon*, Chap. 28. 9. *He that turneth away his Ear from hearing the Law, even his Prayer* (Obſerve, he doth not ſay his Perſon, but even his Prayer) *ſhall be abomination.*

2. God will not ſpare ſuch un-reformed ſinners upon the intreaty of others: The Favourites of Heaven, though never ſ highly in Gods favour; though *Moſes* and *Samuel*, though *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Job* ſhould be the Interceſſors. See *Jer.* 15. *beg.* and *Ezek.* 14. 14. *Though theſe three Men*, Noah, Daniel, *and* Job, *&c.* and this is ſaid no leſs than four times in that Chapter. Let the Conſideration of this move ſinners to Reform by theſe things, eſpecially conſidering,

5. How, or in what degree and meaſure God will puniſh ſuch un-reformed ſinners. This is expreſſed in the words of my Text, yet ſeven times for your ſins. The thing here to be conſidered is, That God will puniſh this

It is expreſſed likewiſe in v. 28. by the Addition of the word (*Vackhamath*, in fury) God there threatning, not ſimply, as before (*I will walk contrary unto you*) but I will walk contrary unto you in Fury.

ſort of ſin, or ſinners with a witneſs. But ſome, perhaps, will put the like Queſtion to me, as the Prophet *Abijah*, in his denunciation of Judgment againſt the Houſe of *Jeroboam*, did unto himſelf, ſaying, 1 *Kings* 14. 14. [*But what?*] In like ſort poſſibly may the Queſtion be demanded of me, But what? (*i. e.*) But when? When will God puniſh theſe un-reformed ſinners ſeven times more for their ſins? *Anſw.* Both here and hereafter.

1. Here; I know not, nor doth any one know to the contrary, but that the Queſtion may be Anſwered, as was that of the ſaid Prophet himſelf, *Even now*: Even now in this Time, the Time of this Life doth the Lord puniſh the ſaid un-reformed ſinners ſeven times more for their ſins, as hath already been more at large proved, and that by divers ſad Experiments Recorded in Scripture for our Admonition. Let ſinners then conſider, and Oh that we in this Nation would conſider, That God hath not puniſhed us ſo much already for our ſins (by Plague and Peſtilence, Fire and Sword by Land and Sea) but he can puniſh us much more, ſeven, yea, ſeventy ſeven times more; Things are not ſo bad with us at preſent, but they may be ſeven times worſe; yea, be it conſidered, what cauſe we have to fear (our ſins being as they are) that things will be yet ſeven times worſe: For as *Ahab* ſaid of *Micajah*,

cajah, so may we say of the words of this my Text, *They Prophecy no good concerning us, but evil*; yea, evil in an high degree: I say, no good at all, unless we our selves grow better. So that till we mend, it cannot be expected, that things should mend, but rather that they should wax worse and worse. Let me hereupon say to sinners, that go on still in their wickedness, in some such words, as they to God in their Prayers (*Nehem.* 9. 32. *Let not all the trouble seem little before thee, that hath come upon us, on our Kings, on our Princes, and on our Priests, and on all thy People* ---) O let not all the Calamities that have come upon us, on our late King and his Royal Throne, on our Nobility, and on our Gentry, on our Clergy, and on our Laity, even on all the People of these three Kingdoms, seem little before you; and let me add, saying in the words of the same Author, *Chap.* 13. 18. Will you bring more wrath upon *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland* by continuing in your Prophanations? I will not say to you, whereby to hasten your Reformation, as *Pharaoh*'s Courtiers did to their Master, whereby to speed his Order for the *Israelites* Departure out of his Dominions, *Knowest thou not that* Egypt (that *England*) *is Destroyed*. But this I say, It becomes and concerns us to know, what Destruction to the Nation is deserved by us; yea, and threatned

to us, if we will not be Reformed by theſe things. O how many ways hath God to puniſh any Perſon or People, that will not be Reformed by his Judgments? Call to mind what hath been ſpoken more particularly in the way of Explication, how, or wherein God may be ſaid to puniſh ſinners ſeven times for their ſins. The remembrance of a few *Latine* words (*Extenſivè, Intenſivè, Protenſivè, Cumulativè, Deſtructivè, Succeſſivè*) may bring much to our minds. And let thoſe ſinners, who like hardy Boys, fear not a little whipping, a little puniſhment, puniſhment in the poſitive Degree, at leaſt, let them fear ſeven times more; let thoſe who fear not to be Chaſtiſed with Whips, fear, at leaſt, to be Chaſtiſed with Scorpions. You Gentlemen, that fear not that God ſhould puniſh you in your Eſtate, by ſome diminution, or in your Perſons, by viſiting you with bodily Sickneſs and Diſtempers (for I am loath to ſpeak too plainly) at leaſt, do you fear, leſt God puniſh you in your good Names, making them to rot, both while you are alive, and when you are dead: Again I ſay, O fear, leſt God puniſh you in your Poſterity, in the beloved Fruit of your Loyns. O give not the Children, which are already born, or may be born of you, Occaſion to Curſe you, by Reaſon of thoſe Plagues and Curſes which you have laid up in ſtore for them. Let

your

your Posterity have no Occasion to use that Proverb of the Jews in *Ezek.*18. whether justly, or unjustly, *The Fathers have eaten sowre Grapes, and the Childrens teeth are set on edge.* O how is the Just God plaguing the Families of many great Persons, while themselves lye silent and rotting in their Graves! As *Job* therefore says of himself, that he did intreat his Wife, *Chap.* 19. 17. So I shall intreat you, Gentlemen, if ever these Sermons shall happen to come in sight of your Eyes, even for the Childrens sake of your own Bodies: I say again, even for the Childrens sake of your own Bodies, that ye would cease your Debaucheries of all sorts, those Debaucheries of yours, the noyse whereof hath filled, for ought I hear, even all Corners and Quarters of the Land.

2. God will punish such un-reformed sinners as afore-said, seven times more hereafter for these their sins, I mean, in Hell. We read of some in Scripture, who are said to be great sinners (such were the *Sodomites*, Gen. 18. 20.) And of *Babylon*, who is styled The great whore, *Rev.* 19. 2. Now, greater sinners shall in Hell be greater Sufferers. Great

And concerning this punishment, let it be Observed, that never was any sinner Reformed by it, nor did God ever intend, or design it for the Reformation, but for the Destruction of sinners, the Fire of Hell being no Purgatory fire, the Papists themselves being Judges.

sinners,

ſinners, great Whores will receive the greater Condemnation, to uſe the Expreſſion of our Saviour, *John* 19. 11. As there be ſome wicked Men, who are two-fold more the Children of Hell than others (as our Saviour ſays, *Mat.* 23. 14.) So we have Reaſon to preſume, that ſuch ſhall have two-fold more of the Torments of Hell, than others. *Potentes potenter torquenta patientur.* *This is the Condemnation*, ſays our Saviour, *John* 3. 19. and ſuch is like to be your Condemnation, not the Common Death, or Condemnation of all wicked and damn'd Men (to ſpeak in alluſion to what is ſaid concerning the ſtrange puniſhment of *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, Numb. 16. 29.) but with an extraordinary, peculiar, and ſignal Condemnation. And therefore, as *Job* ſaid, *That Deſtruction from the Lord was a terror to him*, Chap. 31. 23. So let the ſaid ſignal Condemnation from the Lord be a terror to you, and be you thereby moved and perſwaded to be Reformed by theſe things: And this is the laſt Motive, which I did deſign to propoſe to your Conſideration.

I ſhall Conclude the whole in alluſion to thoſe words of the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 12. 1. where, as he doth exhort, and beſeech the *Romans* by the Mercies, or Compaſſions of God, his bowel-mercies (as the word ſignifies) ſo I ſhall both exhort and beſeech you by the Puniſh-

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ments of God, past and present (those we have felt, and those we do feel) Yea, not onely Divine punishments already felt, but punishments also by vertue of this present Text justly feared; yea, feared or not feared, I beseech you by the seven times more punishment which we have all of us deserved, that you would cease every way and walk that is contrary to God, and that you would be Reformed By These Things, endeavouring that Real, Uniform, Speedy, Constant, and Orderly Reformation. [1. Personal. 2. Domestical. 3. Publique.] which (though according to my weakness, nevertheless, I hope, may be truly said, according to the Holy Scriptures) I have Directed, and more at large exhorted you unto, Persons I mean of all sorts in their several places, and Capacities.

Lam. 5.21. *Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our Days as of Old.*

Octob. 21.
1672.

FINIS.